



Enid = Blyton's

EIGHTH BRER RABBIT BOOK



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Mr. Lion Meets Brer Rabbit

Now once it came to Mr. Lion's ears that Brer Rabbit was getting mighty biggity.

"He's getting so boastful and biggity that there's no doing anything with him," said Brer Fox. "He calls rude names out after us, and he makes pellets of clay from the clay-pit and sends them after us, too—ping ! Look at this lump on my nose—and this one on my cheek. That's where the pellets hit me yesterday."

"You're king of us all," said Brer Bear to Mr. Lion. "Why don't you go after Brer Rabbit ? He's mighty scared of you. He wouldn't dare to play any tricks on you, Mr. Lion ! "

"You could catch him as easy as anything," said Brer Wolf. "You just try, Mr. Lion. He wouldn't be much of a mouthful to you, but he's fat and he'd taste mighty sweet."

"I'll see to it," said Mr. Lion with a roar, and he swung his tail angrily at the back of him. He hadn't told the others that Brer Rabbit had hit him too with a clay pellet. He felt just like catching Brer Rabbit at that very moment.

But Brer Rabbit wasn't to be found just then. He was lying under a bush, fast asleep, with his friend, Brer Terrapin, a-winking and a-blinking nearby, keeping watch. Pretty soon a little Jack sparrow flew down and called out to Brer Rabbit.

"Hey, Brer Rabbit ! You'd better get up and look around ! Mr. Lion is after you, and he's got a mighty big roar and mighty big teeth ! Hey, Brer Rabbit ! You wake up, I say."

Brer Rabbit woke up at once when he heard Mr. Lion's name spoken. He looked at Brer Terrapin. He didn't mind Brer Fox being after him, he laughed at old Brer Bear, and he

wasn't afraid of Brer Wolf. But Mr. Lion was different. He was mighty big and mighty strong, and he had a lot of fierce-looking teeth.

"We'd better hide in the cave, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Terrapin, feeling scared. Brer Rabbit scratched his head and thought a bit. "You go there," he said. "I've got to go and find something first. And while you're there, Brer Terrapin, just practise that voice of yours a bit, will you? Sing out 'Worra, worra, wooooooooooooo!' Just as loudly and mournfully as you can. I won't be long."

Brer Terrapin crawled into a nearby cave and sat there to do as he was told. He opened his mouth and practised his most mournful voice.

"Worra, worra, wooooooooo!" he sang.

Pretty soon Brer Rabbit came along, carrying an armful of old tins from a rubbish-heap. Brer Terrapin stopped singing and looked at them in astonishment. Brer Rabbit took some string from his pocket and made a hole in each tin so that he could thread them all together.

Then he put two big stones down beside Brer Terrapin and grinned.

"I can hear Mr. Lion a-roaring and a-bellowing," said Brer Terrapin, nervously. "Let's get to the back of the cave."

"I'm not coming," said Brer Rabbit. "I'm going to sit outside the cave and wait for Mr. Lion."

"But he's going to catch you," said Brer Terrapin.

"We'll see about that," said Brer Rabbit with a grin. "Now listen to me, Brer Terrapin. I want you to sing your worra-worra-wooooooooo song, and then crash these two stones together, and then pull the string that holds these tins, and make them dance and jingle. You keep on doing that and you'll keep us both safe."

A loud roar made Brer Rabbit leap outside the cave. He sat down on a fallen tree there and waited for Mr. Lion to come.



Pretty soon up galloped Mr. Lion, expecting Brer Rabbit to rush off as soon as he saw him.

But Brer Rabbit didn't. He just sat there. Mr. Lion stopped and looked at him. "Why don't you run away from me?" he said. "Aren't you scared?"

"What! Scared of you!" said Brer Rabbit, pretending to be surprised. "I've seen bigger and fiercer creatures than you, Mr. Lion. No—I'm not scared of you."

Mr. Lion made as if he would leap right on top of Brer Rabbit—but just at that moment came a mournful voice from the nearby cave. "Worra, worra, wooooooooo!"

"What's that?" asked Mr. Lion, startled.

"A worra-worra-woooooo," said Brer Rabbit. "Mighty fierce. Mighty strong. It's a good thing I've got him safe in the cave, because there's nothing he likes better than a good fat lion."

Brer Terrapin struck the two stones together and Mr. Lion jumped.

"What's that now?" he asked.

"Oh, I guess the worra-worra-woooooo has heard your voice and is crashing his teeth together, wishing he could gobble you up," said Brer Rabbit.

"Clish, clash," went the stones, sounding just like teeth being gnashed together.

Then Brer Terrapin pulled the string and all the tins jingled and jangled together. Mr. Lion jumped again and went a little way off.

"What's that worra-worra-woooooo doing now?" he asked. "Will he come out and get me?"

"He can't," said Brer Rabbit. "I guess that's him rattling his chains. He has to be chained up, you see, Mr. Lion, for I wouldn't like to let him loose in the woods when you're about. You see, I'm mighty fond of you, Mr. Lion, so I am, and I'm not letting any worra-worra-woooooos chase after you and eat you."

"That's good of you," said Mr. Lion.

"Not at all," said Brer Rabbit, politely. "I guess you'd do the same for me, Mr. Lion. You wouldn't let anyone chase after me and eat me, would you?"

"I don't think so," said Mr. Lion, doubtfully, knowing that he himself had come to chase and eat Brer Rabbit. But he didn't like to do any eating if the worra-worra-woooooo was nearby. Anyway, if Brer Rabbit could catch and chain a fierce-sounding creature like that, Mr. Lion didn't feel like trying his strength against Brer Rabbit's. He must be very fierce, for all he looked so small.

"I'll let you see the worra-worra-woooooo if you like," said Brer Rabbit, and he went to the cave.

"No, no!" roared Mr. Lion, backing away into a bush. "I can't stay. Don't you let him out now."

"Worra-worra, woooooo!" wailed Brer Terrapin, and crashed the two stones together and jerked the tins on the string. Mr. Lion gave a bellow of fright, leapt over six bushes at once and disappeared in the wood.

Brer Rabbit went down into the cave. He and Brer Terrapin laughed so much that Brer Rabbit nearly split his sides and Brer Terrapin almost cracked his shell.

"You're a wonderful worra-worra-woooooo," said Brer Rabbit, wiping the tears off his whiskers. "Oh, Brer Worra-worra-woooooo, how I do love you-oo-oo-oo-oo!"

Brer Rabbit in Trouble

ONCE Brer Rabbit went to play with old Brer Terrapin on the sandy bank of the river. My, the games they had ! Brer Rabbit built a sand-castle, and Brer Terrapin slid down it on his back. Then he buried Brer Terrapin, and Brer Terrapin made a great sandstorm trying to struggle out again.

They were having such a fine time that neither of them saw Brer Wolf coming along. Brer Wolf didn't see Brer Terrapin, who was half under the sand—all he saw was Brer Rabbit, capering about as if he were mad.

"Now there's a fine dinner dancing about !" said Brer Wolf. "If only I can get Brer Rabbit ! But he's so smart I'm half afraid to try ! "

He hid behind a big sand-castle, and waited for Brer Rabbit to gambol by. He soon did—and then out shot Brer Wolf's big paw, and there lay Brer Rabbit under it wriggling on the sand.

"Let me go, Brer Wolf—please, sir, let me go !" begged Brer Rabbit, so scared that his whiskers shook like leaves on a windy day.

"Now this time, Brer Rabbit, this time you really are caught !" said Brer Wolf. "And a nice dinner you'll make me ! I'm not sharing you with Brer Fox or Brer Bear either ! You'll just about make a good meal for me ! "

"If you carry me home, you'll meet Brer Bear and he'll want to come to dinner," said Brer Rabbit.

"Then I'll eat you here !" said Brer Wolf.

"Oh, please, sir, I'd taste better cooked," said Brer Rabbit. "You'd better cook me."



"I'm going to!" said Brer Wolf. "I'll put you into that old hollow log there, and I'll set light to it and you'll cook nicely!"

Brer Rabbit didn't know what to say to that, so he didn't say anything. He looked round for Brer Terrapin, but that sly old fellow had curled himself under his shell and was lying quite still, as if he were a bit of rock.

Brer Wolf, still holding Brer Rabbit very firmly, looked into the old hollow log. It was open at both ends.

"I must stuff up the log, or you'll run out one end, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Wolf. "I know you! You'd squeeze through a keyhole if you could! But you've come to the end of your tricks at last."

"Please, sir, let me go—oh, please, do let me go!" begged Brer Rabbit, who didn't like the sound of things at all.

Brer Wolf looked round for something to stuff up one end of the hollow log. He couldn't see anything, for on the riverbank was nothing but sand. Brer Rabbit saw him looking, and at once spoke up.

"Look, there's a big stone there, Brer Wolf. You can stuff the log with that, can't you?"

The big stone was Brer Terrapin, of course. Brer Rabbit knew that—but Brer Wolf didn't! Brer Terrapin kept himself curled up as tight as tight, and didn't move an inch. Brer Wolf picked him up and thought he was a bit of hard rock.

"Yes," said Brer Wolf. "This will do nicely to stuff up one end of the log—and, Brer Rabbit, I'm going to sit with

my back to the other end, so you can't escape anyhow. When you're nicely cooked, I'll have you for my dinner."

Brer Rabbit felt happier when he saw Brer Wolf stuffing one end of the log with old Brer Terrapin. He grinned to himself and spoke kindly.

"Well, I surely hope you'll enjoy your dinner, Brer Wolf, I surely do. You look mighty lean and hungry, and you could do with a good meal."

Brer Wolf stuffed Brer Rabbit right inside the log, and then he set fire to the wood. It was dry and rotten, and the log began to crackle at once. Then Brer Wolf sat down with his big back to the other end of the log, so that there was no escape for Brer Rabbit that way.

As soon as Brer Wolf had sat down, Brer Rabbit scuttled along the hollow log till he came to Brer Terrapin.

"Uncurl yourself, Brer Terrapin, and get out!" he whispered. "I'll slip out after you. And we'll go and find a big stone to put in instead of you. Hurry now!"

The old log made such a noise of crackling and burning that Brer Wolf didn't hear the whispering, and he didn't hear old Brer Terrapin creeping out of his end of the log, or hear Brer Rabbit pushing himself out afterwards.

No, old Brer Wolf sat there at his end feeling very hungry and happy, looking forward to a beautiful dinner of roast rabbit. My, it would taste good!

Brer Rabbit scampered up the bank into the wood beyond. He found a big stone and capered quietly back. Old Brer Terrapin watched him from a safe place in the wood, grinning all over himself.

Brer Rabbit stuffed up his end of the log with the big stone. Then he ran back to the wood beside Brer Terrapin and the two watched what would happen.

Pretty soon the log was nearly burnt, and Brer Wolf reckoned that Brer Rabbit was done nicely to a turn. He got up and

kicked the burning log to pieces, looking for the cooked rabbit.

But he couldn't find anything ! He hunted quickly all up and down the burning wood—but no, not a sign of a rabbit was there ! Brer Wolf scratched his head and felt mighty puzzled ! Brer Rabbit couldn't have got out, for it would have been impossible to move that stone—and Brer Wolf himself had guarded the other end.

Then Brer Wolf heard a gay voice calling him from the wood's edge. " Heyo, Brer Wolf ! What are you having a fire for, this hot day ? Are you feeling cold ? "

Brer Wolf looked up—and to his enormous astonishment he saw Brer Rabbit waving to him. Brer Wolf was so surprised that his eyes nearly fell out of his head.

" I've just cooked you ! " he yelled. " What are you doing there ? I tell you, I've just cooked you in this burning log."



"Now don't talk in that silly fashion, Brer Wolf," said Brer Rabbit. "As if I'd allow you to cook me! Why, I've been playing with Brer Terrapin all morning."

"Do you mean to tell me that I didn't catch you down here a little while ago, and stuff you into this log and cook you, Brer Rabbit?" said Brer Wolf, feeling quite faint when he thought of his lost dinner.

"Oh, I don't mean to tell you anything, dear Brer Wolf," said Brer Rabbit. "But I do know you haven't cooked me—and I'd be obliged if you'd lend me a bit of burning wood to start my own fire with at home. Thank you!"

And he darted down, caught up a flaming bough, gave the astonished Brer Wolf a poke in the middle with it, and ran off laughing fit to kill himself. As for old Brer Terrapin, he chuckled so much that he cracked his shell, and had to wear a bit of sticking-plaster across it until it grew together again! Well, well, well!

Brer Bear is Greedy

Nor far from Brer Rabbit's house, out in the fields, grew a large pear tree all by itself. Nobody had planted it—it just grew. Somebody must have dropped a seed from the core of a ripe pear, and it had grown into this fine tree.

It wasn't very far from Brer Fox's house, either, and each year the two of them, Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox, tried to get the pears for themselves. But for many years now it hadn't had any fruit at all.

Then came a year when it was quite full of the most delicious looking pears, golden yellow ! Brer Rabbit kept his eye on it, for he meant to get them. And Brer Fox kept his eye on it too !

"I shall take some of them to market and sell them," said Brer Rabbit. And Brer Fox said just the same thing. But neither of them was going to share those pears with the other.

The time came when they must be picked. They hung there on the tree, ripe and juicy. Brer Rabbit made up his mind to go there early the next day and pick them. Brer Fox made up his mind too !

So off they both went, creeping through the fields with great big baskets.

But when they got to the tree, what did they see but someone else up a ladder, picking those pears as fast as could be—yes, and stuffing them into his mouth and eating them too !

"It's Brer Bear, the greedy thing !" cried Brer Fox in a rage.
"Come along down, Brer Bear, and let me get my pears."

"They're not yours. They're anybody's," called back Brer Bear, and he made very rude noises, gobbling down those juicy pears as fast as ever he could.

Brer Rabbit looked at Brer Fox, and Brer Fox looked at Brer Rabbit. How they wished they had thought of sharing those pears the day before! Now old Brer Bear was eating the lot!

"What can we do?" groaned Brer Fox.

Brer Rabbit blinked his eyes and thought. "You say nice friendly things to him, and see if he'll give you some," he said. "Then you can share with me."

"I'll get some pears from him—but I won't share them with you," said Brer Fox. Then he called up the tree:

"Heyo, Brer Bear! I'm glad to see you've got a good meal. You deserve one, you do, for you're a good fellow, Brer Bear."

This sweet speech only made Brer Bear laugh. "It's no good saying that kind of thing to me," he said to Brer Fox. "I know what you're after!"

"Dear Brer Bear, you are mistaken," said Brer Fox. "You are one of my friends, and it is a pleasure to me to see you enjoying yourself."

"Bah!" said Brer Bear rudely, and he gobbled down three pears at once.

Brer Fox gave it up. "It's no good," he said to Brer Rabbit. "He's too greedy to give anyone anything. Good-bye. I'm going home to breakfast."

He went off—but Brer Rabbit didn't. No—he sat and looked up at Brer Bear till Brer Bear began to feel uncomfortable.

"Go away, Brer Rabbit," he ordered, "there's nothing very exciting about eating pears."

"Oh, indeed there is, Brer Bear," said Brer Rabbit. "I have never seen such greediness in my life—and the noise you make, Brer Bear! Didn't your mother ever teach you any manners? My word, you sound like twenty animals eating



at once ! And you're getting fatter and fatter as I watch you. I'm just wondering if your coat will burst ! ”

“ Brer Rabbit, don't say such rude things ! ” yelled Brer Bear in a rage.

“ Brer Bear, I'm going to say ruder things,” said Brer Rabbit. “ You are a greedy little pig-bear. You will turn into a pig soon. Already your muzzle is beginning to look like a snout ! ”

“ It isn't, it isn't ! Be quiet, I tell you ! ” shouted Brer Bear.

“ You're not only a greedy pig-bear, you are a bad thief-bear,” went on Brer Rabbit. “ I shall make up a song about you, and sing it to everyone. It will go like this :

“ Who's a greedy pig-pig-pig ?
Who is getting big-big-big ?
Brer Bear !
Who's a . . . ?”

But that was too much for Brer Bear. He hated songs made up about him. He picked a great fat pear and hurled it at Brer Rabbit. Brer Rabbit dodged and yelled, "Bad shot, oh bad shot!"

Brer Bear flung down two more pears, but Brer Rabbit neatly dodged again. "Poor Brer Bear—he's too fat to throw!" chanted Brer Rabbit. "Who's a greedy pig-pig-pig? Who is getting big-big-big . . . ?"

"Stop that song!" roared Brer Bear, and he flung pear after pear at Brer Rabbit, till the ground was littered with them. Brer Rabbit pretended to be hit.

"Oh! Oh! You've hurt me, Brer Bear! Oh! Oh! I'm going home."

"Serve you right," said Brer Bear, satisfied, and he began to eat the pears himself again. Brer Rabbit quietly filled his basket with the pears that Brer Bear had thrown at him, and



then, grinning to himself, very softly took away the ladder that was leaning against the tree.

He put the ladder over one shoulder and carried the basket of pears in the other hand. Then he set off to the market, shouting, "Who's a greedy pig-pig-pig?" as he went.

Brer Bear almost fell down the tree in rage—and when he discovered that Brer Rabbit had taken his ladder, and had a basket full of pears as well, he began to howl his head off! He made such a noise that Brer Fox came running to see what the matter was.

"Stop Brer Rabbit, stop him! He's got my ladder and heaps of my pears!" yelled Brer Bear.

Brer Rabbit did a little dance on a grassy bank at the end of the field. "You're so fond of that pear tree you can wait up there till I come back from market!" he cried. "And as for you Brer Fox. I've saved you two lovely ripe pears. Catch!"

Brer Rabbit threw two juicy pears at Brer Fox with all his might. One hit him on the nose and the other on the shoulder. They split, and Brer Fox was covered with sticky pear-juice!

"You wait till I get you—you just wait!" he yelled at Brer Rabbit.

"All right! I'll wait!" chuckled Brer Rabbit, and off he went to market with a basket full of pears. People were astonished to see the ladder too, but he didn't tell anyone anything.

As for old Brer Bear, he had to stay up in the tree till the evening and mighty tired he got too. Brer Rabbit put the ladder back, and skipped off, crying cheekily, "Who's a greedy pig-pig-pig?" at the top of his voice. It's simply no good anyone trying to get the better of old Brer Rabbit!

Brer Rabbit Goes to Market

ONCE Brer Rabbit took three of his children to market, and gave them some money to spend.

The three rabbits were delighted. They wandered round the stalls, and each rabbit bought something different.

The first rabbit bought a tin spade and a tin pail, because he wanted to dig in his garden. The second rabbit bought a balloon-pig. When it was blown up, it stood on its four legs, waggled its tiny curly tail, and looked at the rabbit from small black eyes. When the rabbit pulled the air-stopper from the pig's mouth, the balloon-pig went down flat and made a dreadful wailing noise.

The third rabbit wanted a slate and pencil. He was very good at school, and he thought it would be fun to buy a slate and write sums on it with the slate-pencil.

Brer Rabbit laughed at all the things they had bought, and then set off home with the three young rabbits. But on the way he became very silent and thoughtful. He saw footsteps in the dusty path that he didn't like at all !

Brer Rabbit stood and looked at them. The young rabbits crowded round him in surprise.

"What's the matter?" asked one.

"Matter enough!" said Brer Rabbit, pointing to the sets of footprints. "See that big print there—that's Mr. Lion's paw! And see that footmark over there—that's Brer Wolf's set of toes! And that little one there, small as a dog's with the claws showing, is Brer Fox's. Now I'd just like to know what those three were meeting about!"

"Perhaps they meant to catch us on the way home," said the clever third rabbit.

Brer Rabbit thought the same. He crept behind a tree and looked down the hill they were on. And not very far below, he saw the big maned head of Mr. Lion.

"Now listen to me, each of you," said Brer Rabbit to the three young ones. "You must help me to save you. There are three rabbit-holes here, and you must each run down one—but not too far. Take your toys with you. I am going to sit here and sing a song."

"Yes, Daddy," said all the rabbits.

"Soon Mr. Lion, Brer Wolf, and Brer Fox will creep up the hill and surround me," said Brer Rabbit.

"Oooooh!" said the youngsters in fright.

"Don't be afraid," said Brer Rabbit, "I shan't be caught, and neither will you! That is, if you do as you are told! Now, when I sing the song for the third time, the rabbit with the spade and pail must bang them together as loudly as he can. Understand, little rabbit?"

"Yes, Daddy," said the rabbit, and scuttled away down the nearest hole, taking his spade and pail with him.

"Now you," said Brer Rabbit, turning to the second one, "you must blow up your pig—and when I sing my song for the fourth time, you must let all the air out of him so that he squeals loudly."

"Yes, Daddy," said the second rabbit, and scampered down a hole nearby. Brer Rabbit turned to the third bunny.

"And when I sing my song for the fifth time, you must run your slate-pencil up and down your slate and make it squeak horribly," said Brer Rabbit. "Now hurry. There is no time to be lost!"

The third rabbit disappeared. Then Brer Rabbit sat himself down on a fallen tree and began to sing. And this is what he sang:



"Hi-yi, tiddly-hi,
 I'd like a slice of lion-pie
 Hi-yi, tiddly-ho,
 Down my throat it would love to go !
 Hi-yi, tiddly-hum,
 I wouldn't leave a single crumb !"

Now when Mr. Lion heard this song, he was mighty wild.
 He looked at Brer Wolf and Brer Fox, who were both under a
 nearby bush, and he growled deeply in his big throat.

"Wait till Brer Rabbit comes by with his three children!" he said.

But Brer Rabbit didn't come by. He just sat up there on the log and sang the song again. Mr. Lion stood up angrily.

"Come along," he said to Brer Wolf and Brer Fox. "I'm not going to wait here and listen to a song like that. Lion-pie indeed!"

So the three of them crept up the hill and surrounded Brer Rabbit. He didn't look at all surprised, but just sat and grinned at them.

"Good afternoon," he said.

"It's a mighty bad afternoon for you, Brer Rabbit," said Mr. Lion. "You won't sing that song about lion-pie for the third time!"

"Well, you just listen!" said Brer Rabbit. And he struck up the song again:

"Hi-yi, tiddly-hi,
I'd like a slice of lion-pie!
Hi-yi, tiddly-ho,
Down my throat it would love to go!
Hi-yi, tiddly-hum,
I wouldn't leave a single crumb!"

Now as soon as the first rabbit heard the song sung for the third time, he did as he had been told, and banged his tin spade hard against his tin pail. He made such a noise that Mr. Lion, Brer Wolf, and Brer Fox jumped in fright.

"What's that?" said Mr. Lion, looking all round.

"Oh nothing. I caught a young lion this morning and tied him up with a chain and stuffed him down that rabbit-hole," said Brer Rabbit in an airy sort of voice.

"Stuffed a lion down that rabbit-hole?" said Mr. Lion in horror. "How could you do that?"

"Well, it was a bit of a squash!" said Brer Rabbit. "But I couldn't help that. That's his chain you can hear rattling."

The rabbit banged hard with his spade and pail. Mr. Lion looked rather green. Brer Rabbit crossed his legs and sang the song for the fourth time:

"Hi-yi, tiddly-hi!"

The second rabbit at once took the air-stopper out of his pig's mouth, and the pig wailed and squealed loudly, just as balloon-pigs always do when the air goes out of them. It was a dreadful sound to hear! Brer Wolf clutched hold of Brer Fox, and Mr. Lion looked greener than ever.

"What's that?" said Brer Wolf in a whisper.

"Oh, nothing much," said Brer Rabbit. "I caught a wolf this morning. He called me a rude name, so I tied him up and squashed him down a rabbit-hole too. He didn't like it much but he had to go!"

The balloon-pig squealed. Brer Rabbit tried not to laugh. He got up and did a little dance and began to sing his song for the fifth time. And, of course, the third rabbit took up his slate-pencil and began to run it hard up and down his slate, so that it squeaked most dreadfully. Mr. Lion made a face. Brer Wolf and Brer Fox covered up their ears.

"What can that be?" said Brer Fox, in a fright. "I never heard such a dreadful noise in my life."

"I'm not surprised," said Brer Rabbit. "It's a fox squeaking and squealing because I tied him up and pushed him down a rabbit-hole too. Just listen to him. My, I wonder whether you'd squeal like that, Brer Fox, if I caught you and pushed you down a rabbit-hole? Let me try!"

He made a grab at Brer Fox—but old Brer Fox didn't wait! He was off down the hill like a streak of lightning—and Brer Wolf wasn't long after him! Brer Rabbit pretended to make a grab at Mr. Lion—and Mr. Lion was off too, bellowing in fright.

Old Brer Rabbit waited till they were out of sight, then he lay down on the ground and rolled over and over with laughter. The three little rabbits crept out of their holes and they rolled over with laughter too. Brer Terrapin, who was passing by, was quite alarmed to see and hear them, and wondered whatever had been happening.

Then the four rabbits went off down the hill together, arm in arm—and what do you think they all sang at the tops of their voices ? Yes :

“ Hi-yi, tiddly hi,
We’d like a slice of lion-pie,
 Hi-yi, tiddly-ho,
Down our throats it would love to go !
 Hi-yi, tiddly-hum,
We wouldn’t leave a single crumb ! ”

Brer Rabbit's Christmas Supper

ONE Christmas there was very little in Brer Rabbit's larder or in Brer Terrapin's either. They sat and looked at one another gloomily. What could they have for their Christmas supper?

Now, just before Christmas, Brer Fox called in at Brer Rabbit's. "Heyo, Brer Rabbit!" he said. "Would you like to come and share my Christmas supper with me? You come along, do! Brer Wolf's coming and Brer Bear, too. We'd love to have your company."

Brer Rabbit felt rather doubtful. "I didn't know you'd got anything in your larder," he said.

"Aha, you wait and see!" said Brer Fox. "We'll maybe have chicken stew—ah, yes, with carrots and onions and turnips—all the things you like, Brer Rabbit."

It sounded very good. But Brer Rabbit didn't trust Brer Fox. Brer Fox was a wily one. So was Brer Rabbit. He sat and wondered if he should say yes, he'd go, or no, he wouldn't be along.

"I'll come," he said at last. "And thank you kindly, Brer Fox. I'll be along in good time for supper."

Brer Fox grinned and went. Brer Rabbit hopped along to tell Brer Terrapin. "You be careful, now," said Brer Terrapin. "Brer Fox doesn't go giving food away when his larder's as empty as yours is! He'll be making a meal of *you*, Brer Rabbit, that's what he'll be doing."

"Well, he won't, Brer Terrapin, he won't," said Brer Rabbit. "You and I are going to make a nice little plan, see?"

And we'll have a nice little dinner all to ourselves on Christmas night. You see if we don't."

Now, on Christmas night Brer Rabbit went lippity-clippity through the woods to Brer Fox's house. When he got there he found Brer Terrapin sitting under a bush in the garden, just as he had told him to. And by him, on the ground, was a little string of bells! But Brer Terrapin wasn't ringing them yet.

Brer Rabbit hopped to the lighted window and looked in. He saw Brer Fox there, Brer Wolf and Brer Bear. On the table was a dish of raw carrots, raw turnips and onions all waiting to be cooked in a stew. On the fire hung a big pan of boiling water. Was the chicken in there, cooking away? Brer Rabbit didn't think so, somehow!

He went to the door and knocked loudly—blim-blam, blim-blam! Brer Fox opened it and was full of delight to welcome Brer Rabbit.

"Well, you're nice and early!" he said. "The water's only just begun to boil—for the chicken, of course."

"Of course," agreed Brer Rabbit, sitting down. Brer Fox sat down, too. "Well, what's the news?" said Brer Fox, throwing another log on the fire.

"Plenty of news to-night," said Brer Rabbit! "It's said that Brer Santa Claus is coming along this way with a mighty big sack of food for us all! What do you think of that?"

"There's a fine bit of news!" said Brer Bear. "I hope he'll have a pot or two of honey for me and my family."

"Sure to, Brer Bear. Sure to!" said Brer Rabbit. "He's a kind and generous old fellow, Brer Santa Claus is! Oh, he'll be along soon, no doubt about it—he'll come in his sleigh with his galloping reindeer, and we'll hear his bells jingling out, so we shall!"

Just at that moment Brer Terrapin took up the string of bells he had beside him under the bush and shook them hard.



The jingling came in at the window, and everyone sat up straight. "Jingle-jingle-jingle! Jingle-jingle-jingle!"

"There he is, for sure!" cried Brer Fox, and rushed to the door. Brer Terrapin went on ringing the bells like mad. Brer Bear and Brer Wolf ran to the door, too, and soon all three were out in the snow-covered garden.

"Sounds pretty near!" said Brer Fox, looking up into the sky, hoping to see Santa Claus galloping along, ready to land on his roof. "Yes, pretty near!"

The bells certainly did sound pretty near, for they were just under the bush nearby. But Brer Fox didn't guess that! He and the others stood and waited for Brer Santa Claus to drop down from the sky.

Brer Terrapin crawled silently away from the bush, keeping well down under the snow. The bells sounded no more. Brer Fox and the others felt cold and went indoors to get warm, and to see what Brer Rabbit was up to.

But Brer Rabbit wasn't there! Nor were the carrots, the turnips or onions! They had all disappeared with Brer Rabbit. But the pan of water was still boiling away merrily.

"Where's Brer Rabbit?" said Brer Bear. "And where's all the food?"

Brer Rabbit and the food were far away, waiting for old Brer Terrapin to come along out of the snow. And my, what a fine Christmas supper they both had, and what a fine laugh they had, too!

And when Brer Rabbit met Brer Fox the next day he shouted out to him. "Heyo, Brer Fox! Did Santa Claus leave you a nice lot of presents? Sorry I couldn't wait to share them!"

Brer Fox rushed after him—but Brer Rabbit shot down a hole and laughed. Then he shook out a bit of string and jingled the bells on it.

"There's Brer Santa Claus again!" he shouted up the hole. "You go and join him, Brer Fox. That surely is Brer Santa Claus! Jingle-jingle-jingle!"

Brer Fox's Milk

ONE morning Brer Fox looked out for his bottle of milk, and it wasn't there. Usually it stood on his doorstep, with cream forming on the top, ready for his porridge—but the step was empty.

"Bother!" said Brer Fox. "The milkman has forgotten me."

Then he noticed drops of white splashed by his front gate. He looked at them.

"Now just look there—someone has been along and stolen my milk! They snatched it up from my step, and spilt a few drops going out of the gate. Who's been by this morning?"

He scratched his head and thought. "Old Brer Terrapin's been by, but he wouldn't steal my milk. So has Mr. Ram, but he doesn't like milk. Now who was the other person I noticed going by?"

He slapped his knee hard. "Of course! It was Brer Rabbit! He would take my milk if he saw it standing there. He's a born rascal, a wicked scamp, and if there's a trick he can play on me, he'll do it! I'll go after him!"

Down the road he went, looking for more drops of white. And sure enough he found them. They were here and there in the road, and Brer Fox felt mighty clever at the way he was tracking them.

"They'll lead me to Brer Rabbit's house, as sure as eggs are eggs!" he said to himself. "There they go—up the lane—a few more drops where he spilt my milk! Ah, the robber. Wait till I catch him this morning. I'll make him give me a double-size bottle in return for the one he stole from me!"



He saw some more drops as he turned in at Brer Rabbit's gate—and even more up the path to the little house. Brer Fox was hot with rage. Just wait, Brer Rabbit, just you wait!

He banged on the door.

"Who's there?" called Brer Rabbit. "I'm busy."

"It's a friend," said Brer Fox.

"Friends don't bother me when I'm busy," said Brer Rabbit. "Go away."

Brer Fox opened the door and went into Brer Rabbit's kitchen. There was no one there. Brer Rabbit was busy in his bedroom.

"Hi, Brer Rabbit! You come along in here a minute. I've something to say to you!" called Brer Fox.

Brer Rabbit appeared at the door, looking surprised.

"This is an early morning call, Brer Fox," he said politely.
"Is anything wrong?"

"Plenty," said Brer Fox. "Where's that bottle of milk you stole from my doorstep this morning?"

"Now look here, Brer Fox, if you think you're going to waste my time telling me fairytales about stealing your milk, you're wrong!" said Brer Rabbit.

"You can't tell me you didn't take my milk!" roared Brer Fox, showing his teeth. "I saw where you had spilt the drops on your way back. Yes, I followed the drops of milk all the way to your house. I'm clever, I am!"

"Well, I think you're rather stupid," said Brer Rabbit. "I had been to get a pail of whitewash from old Mr. Ram, and the drops you saw on the road were whitewash, not milk. I'm whitewashing my bedroom, that's what I'm doing, and I'm mighty busy. You go away and leave me to my work."

"Brer Rabbit, I've heard this kind of tale before," said Brer Fox, and he showed his teeth again. "You are always giving me wonderful excuses. I don't believe in that whitewash. Whitewash, indeed! As if you'd go to the trouble of whitewashing your bedroom."

"I don't care if you believe me or not," said Brer Rabbit. "I'm going back to my work. Goodbye."

"Oh no you're not," said Brer Fox, and he reached out and got hold of Brer Rabbit. "Now look here, Brer Rabbit, you're going to give me back my milk, so you are—and you're going to give me twice as much as you took. You took a pint bottle—so you can give me a quart. Now look sharp and get it or I'll take you back home with me, and you won't like that."

"Let me go, Brer Fox," said Brer Rabbit. "I'll get a quart bottle for you. Let me go."

Brer Fox grinned. He let Brer Rabbit go. He watched him take an empty quart bottle from the table and go into the next room. He heard the sound of something being poured into the bottle. Aha! That would teach Brer Rabbit to steal his milk!

Brer Rabbit came back. He handed Brer Fox the bottle, which now gleamed white and full. Brer Fox put it into his pocket and turned to go.

"And next time you go by my house, you think twice about stealing my milk!" he said. Out he went, feeling very pleased with himself indeed. Ah, there weren't many people as clever as old Brer Fox!

He hurried home. He set his porridge to cook on the fire. What a fine feast he would have, with so much milk this morning! He would pour half a tin of syrup over his dish of porridge, for a treat, and then stir in the whole of the milk. He would take his biggest basin, and have a fine feast!

He ladled the porridge into the basin. He emptied the golden syrup over it. He poured in the bottle of milk, and then stirred the whole mixture round and round.

"Now for a fine meal!" said Brer Fox, and dug his spoon into the porridge. He began to eat quickly. The syrup was sweet and tasted fine—but there seemed to be something wrong with his breakfast, all the same. He ate a few more spoonfuls, and then stopped.

It wasn't nice. Something was wrong. But what could it be? There were only porridge oats, milk and syrup in the basin, and that was nice enough, surely? He took a few more spoonfuls and then turned green. He felt sick. He was upset. He was going to be very ill!

He was very ill! Poor Brer Fox was sick, and in the middle of his sickness, he heard someone knocking at the door. It was the milkman!

"Milk-o! Milk-o, Brer Fox! I forgot to leave you your bottle of milk to-day. So sorry, here it is!"

The milkman put a bottle down on the step and left, whistling a tune. Brer Fox sat down in a chair and groaned. So the milkman hadn't left him any milk that morning—and

Brer Rabbit hadn't taken it. He had made a dreadful mistake. But what was the matter with the porridge?

Brer Rabbit's head was suddenly poked round the door, "Heyo, Brer Fox!" said Brer Rabbit, cheerfully. "How did you like the bottle of whitewash? You wouldn't believe I was whitewashing my bedroom, and hadn't taken your milk—so I popped some whitewash in the bottle to make you see I was telling the truth. My—you do look green! You don't mean to say you've drunk the whitewash!"

Poor Brer Fox! He felt too ill to chase old Brer Rabbit.

Then Brer Rabbit saw the bottle of milk that the milkman had just left on the door-step.

"I'll have this in exchange for the quart of whitewash!" he said. "Thanks so much, Brer Fox. So long!"

And off he went, lippity-clippity through the woods. He left little white drops where the milk spilt—but this time there was no Brer Fox to follow them! You can't get the better of old Brer Rabbit!

Brer Rabbit and The Little Boy

Now, once Brer Rabbit peeped over a garden hedge and saw row after row of fat, green lettuces, and row after row of round, white turnips with green tops.

"Look at that!" said Brer Rabbit. "Who would have thought that there were so many lettuces and turnips in the world?"

He heard somebody coming and popped down under the hedge. An old woman went up to the gate and called to the little boy who was playing in the garden.

"Master Robert! I brought the sack for some of your Dad's lettuces. You let me in."

The little boy ran to the gate and unlocked it. "Come in, Mrs. Robins," he said. "My dad told me to give you twelve."

Brer Rabbit's eyes almost popped out of his head as he saw the little boy pulling up twelve fat green lettuces. Into the old woman's sack went they, and off she shuffled through the gate.

Brer Rabbit took another look at those lettuces and turnips, and then he heard someone else coming along, too. This time it was an old man. He had a bag in his hand.

He called to the little boy. "Hey, Master Robert! Here I come for the twelve turnips your dad said I could have. You let me in and I'll get them."

The little boy unlocked the gate, and then ran to help the old fellow pull up twelve round white turnips. Brer Rabbit's mouth watered to see such beauties. What a kind man Robert's father must be to hand out his lettuces and turnips like that!

"Thanks, Master Robert," said the old man, and off he went,

carrying his bag of turnips. "These will make some fine soup for my supper."

Brer Rabbit sat back and thought hard. If there were any more lettuces and turnips to give away, he didn't see why he shouldn't have his share!

"I'll run along home and get a sack," he thought. "Two sacks. One for lettuces and one for turnips."

So he fetched two nice big sacks, and off he went back to the garden gate. The little boy was still there. He was playing with a wooden hoop and a stick, and was trying to make it roll along the ground. But it kept falling down, and he was angry.

"Hey, Master Robert!" called Brer Rabbit from the gate. "I've come for my twelve lettuces and twelve turnips. You unlock the gate and I'll get them. It won't take me a minute."

The little boy stared in surprise at Brer Rabbit. "Well, now," he said, "my father forgot to tell me about you. He told me about Mrs. Robins, and he told me about Mr. Thomas. But he didn't say a word about you."

"Oh my, what a pity now!" said Brer Rabbit, and he gave a heavy sigh. "To think I've walked all this way and now I can't get my lettuces and turnips!"

"Poor thing!" said the little boy. "Well, come along and help yourself. I'll tell my father you've been along and he'll be sorry he forgot to tell me about you."

He unlocked the gate and in went Brer Rabbit, clippity-clippity, carrying his two sacks over his shoulder. "Now, don't you bother to come and help me," he said to the little boy. "You go on bowling your hoop. I won't disturb you."

Well, Brer Rabbit didn't bother to count out twelve lettuces and twelve turnips. He just pulled up as many as would fill his sacks, and he hummed a little song of happiness.

When his sacks were filled he ran to the gate. "Thank you, Master Robert," he said. "I'm sorry I haven't got time to



show you how to bowl your hoop properly, but maybe I'll come along another day and show you."

"Oh, thank you!" said the little boy. "You are kind!"

"Don't mention it," said Brer Rabbit politely, and out he went. But, oh my, he walked straight into the little boy's father, who was coming along the lane.

"Look who's here!" cried the farmer, and he lifted Brer Rabbit so high in the air that he shivered and shook. "Brer Rabbit, as sure as turnips are turnips and lettuces are lettuces! And with two sacks full of my crops, too!"

"You forgot to tell me he was coming," said the little boy, running up.

"I did not," said his father. "He's a rascal, that's what he is!" And he set Brer Rabbit down with a bump on the ground. Then he gave him a hard smack one side of him, and a hard smack the other side of him. "One for the lettuces and

one for the turnips ! ” he said “ And now into one of the sacks you go and I’ll just go and tell Cook there’ll be rabbit for dinner ! ”

He tied up the neck of the sack, flung it on the ground with poor Brer Rabbit inside it, and went off whistling. Brer Rabbit sat in the dark of the sack, and shook like a jelly.

He heard the little boy banging his hoop. Then he heard the hoop falling over again, and the little boy’s cross voice : “ Oh, you silly hoop ! Why don’t you bowl along properly ? I hate you when you keep falling over.”

“ I’ve got time now to show you how to bowl it properly,” called Brer Rabbit from the sack. “ You let me show you before your father comes back. Quick ! ”

“ All right. But you’ll have to hurry,” said the little boy, and he undid the sack quickly. “ Here you are—here’s the hoop and here’s the stick. You show me how to bowl the hoop properly.”

Brer Rabbit hopped out of that sack as saucy as a blackbird. He took the stick, set the hoop up straight, and gave it a bang. Off went the hoop towards the gate.

“ Here we go ! ” sang out Brer Rabbit, following the hoop. “ Bang, bang, bang—see how I keep it going. That’s all you’ve got to do, Master Robert—bang it well, keep it upright, and it will go for miles ! ”

“ Let me try, let me try ! ” shouted the little boy. “ Oh, my hoop is going out of the gate ! ”

“ Don’t worry, I’ll go after it ! ” sang out Brer Rabbit, and he scampered out of the gate too. “ Come back, hoop, come back ! Hey, don’t you run away like that ! Come back ! ”

But the hoop didn’t come back. It went bowling merrily down the hill, with Brer Rabbit racing after it at twenty miles an hour.

It didn’t come back at all. And neither did that rascal of a rabbit !

Brer Rabbit's Swing

Now, once Brer Bear had a pear tree so full of fruit that he had to prop up the branches in case they broke. But he was mean with his pears and he wouldn't give a single one to Brer Rabbit or any of the others.

"Now, Brer Rabbit—you're always so smart at getting what you want," said Brer Fox. "Can't you think of any way to get a few of Brer Bear's pears?"

"I'm not going sneaking into Brer Bear's garden to have my ears bitten off, if that's what you're thinking of," said Brer Rabbit.

"Well, think of a trick then," said Brer Wolf.

"What will you give me if I do?" said Brer Rabbit.

"Half the pears you get," said Brer Wolf. "You say what you want done and we'll do it."

"Right," said Brer Rabbit. "But no trickery now, Brer Fox."

Well, Brer Rabbit made Brer Fox and the rest build up two poles with a cross-piece at the top, just outside Brer Bear's garden, near the pear-tree that grew by the wall. Then he made them hang two ropes from the cross-piece and put a board at the bottom of the ropes.

"It's a swing!" said Brer Fox. "What's the idea of a swing, Brer Rabbit?"

"You'll see," said Brer Rabbit, and he sat himself on the swing. "Now push, Brer Fox, push, Brer Wolf; push as hard as you please. Swing me high!"

So they pushed him and swung him high—and higher—and higher still. And soon he was swinging so near the pear tree that he could reach those pears.

He picked one each time he touched the tree, and threw it down to the others. One-two-three-four-five—my word, he soon had a fine lot of pears for the others. They caught them as he threw them and put them into their basket.

"Put out half for me," yelled Brer Rabbit. "Brer Fox, do you hear me? I want half."

But they didn't put him out any at all. He tried to slow down the swing to stop it and jump down—but Brer Wolf pushed him so hard that he nearly went over the top of the swing!

And whilst he was swinging high like that and couldn't stop, Brer Wolf, Brer Fox and Brer Coon all went off with the pears, giggling to think how easily they had tricked Brer Rabbit.

"My! To think he's so stupid!" said Brer Wolf. "Well, it just serves him right."

But Brer Rabbit had caught sight of Brer Bear in his garden, and he called out to him.

"Hey, Brer Bear! You go after Brer Fox and Brer Wolf and Brer Coon and ask them what they've got in their basket. And I can tell you what the answer will be—PEARS!"

Brer Bear gave a snort and ran after the others. Soon he had caught them up, and he yelled to them to know what they had in their basket. He looked so fierce that Brer Coon dropped the basket and all three fled.

But Brer Fox yelled out to Brer Bear: "If you want to know who got us the pears, you find old Brer Rabbit. And you'd better get back home quick, or he'll have picked the whole tree bare!"

Brer Bear picked up the basket of pears and hurried home, quite expecting to see Brer Rabbit up his tree. But he wasn't. He was doing something much more surprising.

He was giving all the baby bears a turn at swinging! First he gave one a swing, then another, and the little bears shouted in glee.



Brer Bear panted up. He looked sternly at Brer Rabbit. "Brer Fox says you took pears from my tree," he said sternly.

"Yes, Brer Bear, so I did," said Brer Rabbit, in a very humble voice. "And I'm sorry for it now. I could have climbed up the tree and got plenty for myself while you were gone, Brer Bear, but I didn't. I'm giving your children a swing instead. I'll give you a swing, too, if you like."

"No," said Brer Bear, who didn't like swinging at all. He stood and watched Brer Rabbit panting and pushing, panting and pushing, and the little bears yelled with glee as they went higher and higher.

"That's really good of you, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Bear, when each little bear had had a turn. "Now you come in and have a drink of iced lemonade with me. And maybe afterwards we'll pick a few pears."

So when Brer Fox, Brer Wolf and Brer Coon came sneaking by a little while later, to see if any pears were lying forgotten on the ground, they had a most unpleasant surprise !

Brer Rabbit was up the tree, picking pears as fast as he could, throwing them down to Mr. and Mrs. Bear, who were putting them into baskets.

Brer Bear saw them and glared.

"Get away, thieves ! Be off, robbers !" he shouted.

"But it was Brer Rabbit who picked your pears !" yelled back Brer Fox in disgust.

"Yes, and he's sorry for it, and he's given all my children a swing," called back Brer Bear. "And I tell you, if a man turns over a new leaf I help him ! And Brer Rabbit will have more pears to take home in his basket than ever you did in yours. Be off ! "

"Yes, be off !" said Brer Rabbit, and he threw a very ripe, juicy pear at Brer Fox. It hit him on the nose and the juice ran all over his fine whiskers. Brer Bear gave a squeal of laughter.

"Good shot, Brer Rabbit. We'll give them some pears after all—here's another ! "

And that one landed on Brer Wolf's head, and the next one on Brer Coon's tail. It didn't take them long to scuttle away home !

Well, well—I don't know whether I'd rather have Brer Rabbit for my friend or my enemy—he's just as tricky, whichever he is.

Where's the Treasure, Brer Rabbit?

Now, once it happened that Brer Rabbit's old aunt had a lot of carrots she didn't want, and she sent to tell Brer Rabbit this.

" You come along and collect them," she said. " But come at night, Brer Rabbit, because if the neighbours see you carrying off my carrots, they'll think I should have given them half."

So Brer Rabbit went along at night. He went three times to his old aunt's, each time with a sack. He filled it full of carrots, and staggered home with them.

" My, I'll have enough carrots for soup for ten years ! " he said to himself, as he dumped the carrots in his shed.

Now, each time he went home from his old aunt's house he had to pass Mr. Benjamin Ram's house. Mr. Ram sat up late at night practising his violin, and he saw Brer Rabbit passing in the moonlight.

" Look at that fellow Brer Rabbit," he said to his wife. " Coming by night after night with a full sack on his back ! He's got treasure somewhere, no doubt about that ! Ah, Brer Rabbit is a mighty clever creature, so he is—he's found treasure somewhere, and he's hiding it away ! "

Now, Mrs. Benjamin Ram could never keep a secret, so when she met Brer Fox the next day she told him about Brer Rabbit.

" Each night we see him staggering along with a load of treasure on his shoulder ! " she said. " Where he gets it, goodness knows—and where he hides it is another matter, too, Brer Fox."

Brer Fox listened hard. Treasure ! Found by Brer Rabbit—and hidden by Brer Rabbit, too ! What was it, and where was it ?

He went to Brer Wolf and the two put their heads together. "We'll lie in wait for him to-night," said Brer Wolf. "He's going to a meeting. We'll pounce on him as he goes through the woods, and we'll make him lead us to the treasure."

So that night they lay in wait for old Brer Rabbit. He came along whistling, thinking of nothing in the world but carrot soup.

Whoooosh ! That was Brer Fox pouncing on Brer Rabbit. He got hold of his collar and held him tight. Then out came Brer Wolf and grinned to see Brer Rabbit looking so surprised.

"What's the meaning of this ?" said Brer Rabbit, angrily. "Is this a nice way to treat a friend ?"

"We've heard about your treasure, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Wolf, and he dug Brer Rabbit in the ribs. "Aha ! We got to hear of it all right."

"Then you heard about it before I did," said Brer Rabbit, puzzled. "What treasure is this ?"

"Now, now, Brer Rabbit, don't you try and deceive your old friends," said Brer Wolf. "Haven't you been carrying sacks of treasure through the woods every night this week ?"

"Sacks of carrots, you mean," said Brer Rabbit, trying to wriggle free. "I've got no treasure, Brer Wolf !"

"Shame on you, Brer Rabbit, for telling us such a story !" said Brer Wolf. "Shake him, Brer Fox, and maybe the truth will jerk out of him."

Brer Fox shook poor Brer Rabbit till his teeth rattled.

"You come with me and I'll show you the carrots !" said Brer Rabbit.

"We don't want to see your carrots," said Brer Fox, giving him another shake. "We want to see where you've hidden the treasure."

"Is it in some cave?" asked Brer Wolf. "Or in a hollow tree? You tell us, Brer Rabbit, and we'll let you go. If you don't tell us, into the pot you'll go."

"If I go into the pot you won't get any treasure!" said Brer Rabbit at once.

"We'd rather have the treasure than eat a skinny rabbit like you," said Brer Wolf. "Lead us to the treasure, Brer Rabbit."

Brer Rabbit stood and thought for a minute, not at all liking Brer Fox's claws sticking into his neck.

"Well, come along then," he said at last. "Come with me!"

And off they went through the wood, Brer Fox still hanging on to Brer Rabbit's collar. He led them a pretty dance, old Brer Rabbit did! He went through the wood, and down the lane and back through the wood again, and up the hill and down it, and he came to a very desolate place indeed.

"Come on, now—show us where the hiding-place is," said



Brer Wolf at last. "You're just taking us for a walk, Brer Rabbit. One more chance for you—and if you don't find the treasure, we'll drag you home to Brer Fox's."

Brer Rabbit came at last to where he had planned to take them. It was a cave in the hillside, dark and deep. Its mouth could be seen in the moonlight.

"You look down in that cave," said Brer Rabbit, in a low voice. "You'll find something that'll surprise you both! Mind, it's very heavy, so be careful how you carry it."

"Ah, so we've found your hiding-place at last!" said Brer Wolf. "Come on, Brer Fox. He can go now. We'll go in and drag out the sacks."

Brer Fox let Brer Rabbit go. He shot off like a bullet out of a gun. He went to a nearby rabbit-hole, and backed down it, till only his big eyes were looking out.

Brer Fox and Brer Wolf disappeared into the mouth of the dark cave. They went down into what seemed like a steep pit. Brer Wolf slithered a little, and fell on to something big and soft.

It was warm! It got up. It lashed out with something fierce and sharp. And it roared!

How it roared! Brer Wolf almost leapt out of his skin, and he began to climb out of the pit as fast as ever he could.

Mr. Lion was down that cave. His wife was there too, and his two cubs. They were all awake now, and up the pit they leapt, into the dark cave above, and out into the moonlight. How they roared and bellowed!

Brer Wolf was gone, with a scratch right down his back. Brer Fox was running for all he was worth, half the hairs gone from his tail. They were both so frightened that they didn't even stop to think about Brer Rabbit.

He was sitting in the hole, laughing fit to kill himself at the sight of Brer Wolf and Brer Fox running for their lives. Mister Lion heard him, and stared down into the rabbit-hole.



"Brer Rabbit—did you bring those two to my den tonight?" he said, lashing his tail about.

"Mister Lion, sir, I thought you might want a good dinner," said Brer Rabbit. "Didn't you catch them?"

"You tell me next time there's a dinner coming," growled Mister Lion. "And don't let it fall on me when I'm asleep!"

Brer Rabbit crept home safely. He locked and bolted his door—but when he saw Brer Wolf limping by the next day, he opened his window a crack, and shouted after him.

"Heyo, Brer Wolf! Did you find the treasure all right? My, you'll be mighty rich now, Brer Wolf, you will. Can you spare a penny for a poor old rabbit?"

Brer Wolf couldn't. He couldn't spare anything except a very fierce look indeed!

Keep an Eye on Brer Rabbit

ONE day Brer Rabbit was walking through the woods when he saw a sack lying under a bush.

"Ho!" said Brer Rabbit, stopping. "Somebody's put something in that sack and hidden it under the bush. They didn't know I was coming along this morning!"

Brer Rabbit was always full of curiosity and he felt that he simply must know what was in the sack. So he looked all round to make sure no one was about, and then he crawled under the bush.

There was certainly something in that sack—something that moved when he touched it.

"Quack!" said the something in the sack. "Quack!"

"A duck!" said Brer Rabbit. "It's something to do with Brer Fox, no doubt about that!"

"Quack!" said the something again, and moved in the sack. Brer Rabbit opened the neck of the sack and put in his paw to pull out the duck. He thought it must be a mighty fat one by the size.

Something sharp caught his paw and he squealed. "Let me go! Let me go! I was only going to take you back to the pond, duck!"

But it wasn't a duck in the sack—it was old Brer Fox! He had put himself there to catch Brer Rabbit, and he had quacked just like a duck! It was Brer Wolf who had tied up the sack and pushed it under the bush—and now here was Brer Fox grabbing at Brer Rabbit with his sharp teeth for all he was worth!

He crawled out of the sack, still with Brer Rabbit's paw in

his mouth. Then he caught him round the neck with his paws, and let go with his teeth so that he could talk.

"A nice little trap for you, Brer Rabbit," he said. "Very nice indeed. Now come along and find Brer Wolf. He'll be just as pleased to see you as I am!"

"Brer Fox, you let me go," said Brer Rabbit, very angry with himself for falling into such a silly trap. "You let me go! Look, I've got a lot of money on me to-day—you let me go and I'll give it all to you."

"We shall have it anyhow," said Brer Fox.

"You'll only have half if you share with Brer Wolf," said Brer Rabbit. "You let me go and you can have it all."

"Give it to me, then," said Brer Fox, and Brer Rabbit handed him a little leather bag full of money. Brer Fox peered into it and then stuffed it into his pocket. But he didn't let Brer Rabbit go! He held on to him tightly!

"You're a cheat, Brer Fox," said Brer Rabbit, angrily. "You said you'd let me go if I gave you the money."

"I didn't," said Brer Fox, with a grin. "I just said 'Give it to me,' and you gave it. Come along."

"I'll tell Brer Wolf," said Brer Rabbit, almost falling over himself as Brer Fox dragged him along.

They came to Brer Wolf's house. He was there mending his fence, hammering in big nails as fast as he could. He grinned when he saw Brer Rabbit with Brer Fox.

"Ha! He fell into the trap, did he?" said Brer Wolf. "Well, I'll just go and put the pot on to boil. I'll get some greens ready, too. He'll be nice in a rabbit stew."

He put down his hammer and went indoors. He turned round at the door and shouted: "Set him to work while I'm gone, Brer Fox. Let him go on with my fence."

"You set to work," said Brer Fox to Brer Rabbit, and so poor Brer Rabbit had to take the hammer and begin nailing the fence as fast as he could. Brer Fox stood close to see that

he didn't get away. Rap-rap-rap ! Rap-rap-rap ! That was old Brer Rabbit hammering hard at the fence, driving in the nails as fast as he could.

Brer Fox's coat flapped in the wind. Brer Rabbit looked at it out of the corner of his eye. He took careful hold of the coat and nailed it to the fence with his next lot of nails. Rap-rap-rap ! That was one nail in the coat. Rap-rap-rap ! That was another. Rap-rap-rap . . .

Brer Rabbit moved along to the next bit of fence, and Brer Fox tried to move up after him. But he couldn't because his coat was nailed fast to the fence ! He pulled, thinking it had caught, but it hadn't. Then he saw that it was nailed fast !

He gave a shout of rage and tugged hard to get his coat free. Brer Rabbit took his chance and was off like a shot ! Through a hole in the fence he went, and off to the woods in a trice ! But he didn't run far. No—he hid under a gorse bush and watched.

Brer Wolf came running out when he heard Brer Fox's yells. "He's nailed my coat to the fence !" shouted Brer Fox. "I can't get away."

"Slip your arms out of your coat, Brer Fox, and run after him !" shouted Brer Wolf. So Brer Fox slipped his arms out and joined Brer Wolf in chasing after Brer Rabbit. But they went the wrong way, and soon they were out of sight.

Brer Rabbit hopped back to the fence. He grinned when he saw Brer Fox's coat flapping there. He put his hand into one of the pockets and took out his leather bag full of money. Then he put his hand in another pocket and took out two silver shillings. He wrote a note and pinned it to Brer Fox's coat. Then off he went like the wind, as merry as a blackbird in spring.

Brer Fox came back with Brer Wolf. They were both as angry as could be.

"Why you couldn't keep your eye on him for just two



minutes while I was getting the pot boiling, I don't know," grumbled Brer Wolf. "Now the pot will have boiled over and there'll be a fine old mess."

"What about my coat?" said Brer Fox, gloomily, going over to it. "I'll have to tear it to bits to get it off this fence, he's nailed it so fast."

"What's that note?" said Brer Wolf, seeing the bit of paper flapping in the wind. They read it together.

Brer Rabbit had written :

“ I’ve taken back my bag of money, and I’ve taken two shillings of yours as my wages for helping Brer Wolf with his fence. You can ask him for it back, as it was his work I was doing. See you sometime.

Brer Rabbit.”

Then, of course, there was a fine old upset ! Brer Wolf accused Brer Fox of taking Brer Rabbit’s money for himself, when he should have shared it with him—and Brer Fox wanted two shillings from Brer Wolf, because Brer Rabbit had taken it for wages.

A voice came over the fence.

“ Hey, Brer Fox ! I’ll give you a shilling for that old coat of yours on the fence. It won’t be much use to you now. I’d like to wear it when I’m gardening ! Hey, Brer Wolf, your pot’s a-boiling over. I’ve just looked ! ”

It was Brer Rabbit, of course. What are you to do with a rascal like that ?

Wherever is Brer Rabbit?

BRER WOLF and Brer Fox were very angry with Brer Rabbit. Somebody had been playing tricks on them, and who could it possibly be but Brer Rabbit?

“Twice this week somebody has come in the night, unscrewed my garden gate from its hinges and left it on my front doorstep,” grumbled Brer Wolf.

“And three times this week somebody has unscrewed my beautiful door-knocker and screwed it on to the front gate,” said Brer Fox. “I’m getting tired of all the little rabbits and foxes coming and banging it on my front gate.”

“It’s that rascal of a Brer Rabbit,” said Brer Wolf, gloomily. “I know it is. It’s the kind of joke he thinks is mighty funny.”

“We’ll watch out for him,” said Brer Fox. “We’ll sit outside his house and wait for him. He’s got to go out sometime!”

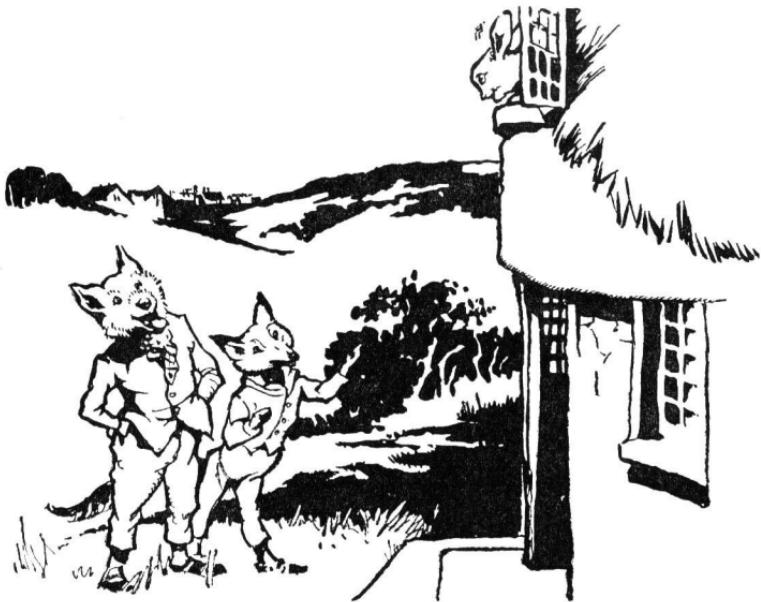
So they sat outside Brer Rabbit’s house and waited. He opened his window and called out to them. “Hey, you there! Are you waiting for a job? Well, you can sift over my coal for me and cut down those nettles over there. I’ll pay you a penny a day.”

“We’re waiting for you, Brer Rabbit, not for a job!” roared Brer Wolf. “And we’ll get you, don’t you fret!”

“I’m not fretting,” said Brer Rabbit, cheerfully. “I’m as happy as a jay-bird. Well, well, I’ll be in the high street this morning, so you can look for me there.”

“We’ll catch you before you get there,” said Brer Fox.

“All right, you do that,” said Brer Rabbit. “But if you don’t, look for me in the middle of the High Street at eleven



o'clock. I'll wait for you there. I'll wait all day, Brer Fox and Brer Wolf, but pray don't keep me waiting too long."

"Pah!" said Brer Wolf. "You won't be in the middle of the High Street all day long without us knowing you are there and pouncing on you—you won't be there, Brer Rabbit, so just stop your silly boasting!"

"Look here, Brer Wolf—I tell you I'll be there," said Brer Rabbit, leaning out of his window. "And what's more, even if I stay there all day long, you won't catch me!"

"Ho! I'll give you half my carrot crop if your words come true!" grunted Brer Wolf.

"And I'll give you half mine," said Brer Fox, with a scornful laugh. "You and your boasting! Why, you won't even leave the house, you know that!"

"Get half your crops ready," said Brer Rabbit, pulling in his head. "You'll have to hand them over to-night—and

what's more I've got Brer Terrapin here, and he's heard every word you said."

Brer Fox looked at Brer Wolf and Brer Wolf stared back.

"I'll stay here and watch for him to go out—and you can go to the High Street and watch there, in case he gives me the slip and really does go there," said Brer Fox. "Come back if he isn't there, and we'll change places."

"Right," said Brer Wolf, and he ambled off down the road to the town. He soon came to the High Street. It was Market Day, and there was a lot of traffic, and a great many people. Brer Wolf sat himself down to watch for Brer Rabbit's arrival.

"And when I see him, I'll go for him!" said Brer Wolf to himself. "I'll teach him to unscrew my gate and put it on my front dootstep!"

Back at Brer Rabbit's house Brer Fox sat watching. The postman came with a sack of letters and put some in at Brer Rabbit's door. Brer Fox poked the sack hard when the postman came back, just in case Brer Rabbit had managed to hide himself there! But no, he wasn't there.

The greengrocer came with a basket of greens. Brer Fox poked that, too, when the basket passed him again, to see if Brer Rabbit was under the greens—but he wasn't.

Presently Brer Fox heard Brer Terrapin's voice in a nearby field. It sounded as if he were trying to speak very quietly, so Brer Fox pricked his ears up at once.

"Wait, Brer Rabbit," he heard Brer Terrapin say. "Brer Fox is watching still. Don't run yet. Keep down the hole a mite longer. Shhh!"

Brer Fox pricked up his ears even more. What! Had that rascally Brer Rabbit managed to get out to that field nearby? Was he waiting to run in half a minute?

"Sh, Brer Rabbit, don't make a noise," he heard Brer Terrapin say. "Brer Fox is a-pricking up his ears. He may have heard you. Sh, Brer Rabbit."

That was enough for Brer Fox. He shot over to the field and pounced on something brown—but it was only an old sack. Brer Terrapin was there alone.

“Where’s Brer Rabbit?” shouted Brer Fox. Brer Terrapin began to laugh. He pointed back to the house and Brer Fox stared in rage—for there was Brer Rabbit hopping out of his front door as merry as you please! He waved a paw to Brer Fox and went down the lane, lippitty-clippity, as fast as he could!

“You tricked me, Brer Terrapin, you tricked me with your whispering out here!” shouted Brer Fox—but there wasn’t any time to rage at Brer Terrapin if he wanted to go after Brer Rabbit, that was certain! Off he went after him—Brer Rabbit was already out of sight.

Halfway to the town Brer Fox met Brer Wolf. “He’s not anywhere to be seen in the High Street,” began Brer Wolf, and then stopped when he saw Brer Fox’s angry face.

“He’s gone—he’s in the town right now!” snapped Brer Fox. “What do you want to leave it for, just this very minute!”

“Well, why didn’t you catch him then?” growled Brer Wolf. “Weren’t you supposed to lie in wait for him?”

“No time to quarrel,” said Brer Fox, and the two of them loped off to the town. They came to the High Street and looked all about. The clock struck eleven from the Town Hall tower.

“That’s when Brer Rabbit said he’d be here,” said Brer Fox.
“Watch now! Watch everyone who comes!”

So they watched. They saw folks driving pigs and hens to the market, but not one of them was Brer Rabbit. They looked at the stall-keepers closely. They stared at the passengers that came off the old bus. They looked at a fellow carrying a ladder, and they went and prodded some sacks on a barrow wheeled by Mr. Benjamin Ram.

He was astonished. “Hey, there—what are you prodding

my potatoes for? You're not the policeman, are you? Be careful I don't report you to him!"

The policeman came up frowning. Someone came by carrying what looked like a clothes-horse over his shoulder, and some red flags. Somebody else came by with pots of paint, and still others came along with other things. It was a very, very busy time.

"Move on, there," said the policeman to Brer Fox and Brer Wolf. He was a stoat and he had a very sharp face indeed. Brer Fox and Brer Wolf moved on.

The fellow with the clothes-horse and the red flags walked into the middle of the High Street, among all the traffic. He set up his clothes-horse, and hung red flags on it. Then he bent down and began to pick holes in the road with a small pick-axe.

"There now—fancy sending a workman to see to the road on a Market Day," said Brer Coon to his wife. "Isn't that just the way things happen! Now the traffic will be held up all day, and will have to go in single lines."

"Well, I wouldn't care to work in the very middle of the traffic like that," said Mrs. Coon. "I should be afraid of being run over."

"Oh, he's got his red flags out," said Mrs. Ram. "He'll be all right. Red for danger, you know."

Well, you've guessed of course! The rabbit workman in the very middle of the High Street, with his little clothes-horse round him, and his red flags hiding him, was old Brer Rabbit.



There he was, chipping hard with his pick-axe, smoking a pipe, a red handkerchief round his neck and a belt holding up his dirty blue trousers.

Nobody took any notice of him, except the bus-drivers and the waggoneers who had to avoid him, and often waited a long time for the traffic to clear. The policeman took no notice of him, either, except sometimes to sort out the traffic round him.

At one o'clock Brer Rabbit stopped work, sat down, put his pick-axe behind him, took out some sandwiches, and spread a huge newspaper in front of him to read. The smoke from his pipe rose up steadily.

Brer Fox and Brer Wolf had no sandwiches and they didn't like to go off and have a meal anywhere in case they missed Brer Rabbit after all.

"That fellow's lucky, sitting there with his dinner and his pipe and paper," said Brer Fox gloomily. "I guess he'll take more than an hour over it. These workmen are lazier than anyone!"

But he didn't. At five to two he put his paper away, picked up his pick-axe and began to chip-chip-chip again. He had made quite a big hole now.

"Good workman, that," said Mr. Benjamin Ram to his wife. "Hardly took an hour off for his lunch, and never stops working for a minute. Whatever job he's doing will soon be finished!"

At five o'clock the workman stood up. He shook the dust off himself, picked up his clothes-horse, draped his red flags round his shoulders, took his pick-axe and walked slowly over to the policeman.

"See those fellows," he said to Mr. Stoat, and he pointed to Brer Fox and Brer Wolf. "They're planning some kind of mischief, I'm sure. They've been sitting here all day long doing nothing. You ask them what they're up to, Mr. Policeman."

And then Brer Fox and Brer Wolf saw who the workman was—Brer Rabbit, of course, as cheeky as ever, standing there as bold as brass. They leapt to their feet—but they couldn't pounce on Brer Rabbit when Mr. Stoat the policeman was there. Oh no, that would never do !

“They owe me half a crop of carrots each,” said Brer Rabbit. “And they don’t want to pay it, Mr. Stoat. You ask Brer Terrapin over there about it. He’ll tell you they owe it !”

Brer Terrapin spoke up well, of course, and as for Brer Fox and Brer Wolf—well, they looked as if they would burst with rage ! Mr. Stoat took out his notebook and wrote everything down most solemnly.

“Pay your debts or go to prison,” he said to Brer Fox and Brer Wolf. “I’ll see you home safely, Brer Rabbit. I don’t like the look in these fellows’ eyes.”

So off went old Brer Rabbit, chatting gaily with the policeman, and Brer Fox and Brer Wolf went home to brood over their carrots. How could they have been so blind ? There was Brer Rabbit holding up the traffic all day long in front of everyone—and nobody, NOBODY stopped him.

“We must have dreamed it,” said Brer Fox. But they hadn’t, because the hole in the road was still there the next morning. And what was more, somebody came in the night and took Brer Wolf’s gate off its hinges and put it on his front doorstep—and you should see where Brer Fox’s front door knocker is ! Screwed to Brer Wolf’s front gate !

You simply never know what that rascal of a rabbit will be up to next !

Oh ! Brer Rabbit's Clever !

THERE WAS a time when Brer Rabbit played so many tricks on Brer Fox and Brer Wolf that they put their heads together to catch him.

" We can't put up with him and his bad ways any longer," said Brer Fox.

" Time he was a-boiling in our pot," said Brer Wolf.

" A-boiling and a-bubbling," said Brer Fox, and he smacked his lips. " We'll get him, Brer Wolf, we will, as sure as we've got whiskers and tails!"

Well, of course, old Brer Rabbit got to hear of their plotting and planning, and he grinned to himself. All the same, he kept his door locked. He didn't want the two of them bursting in on him when he wasn't expecting it. He was small and they were big.

It wasn't long before they came along to his house. They tried the door. It was locked. Brer Rabbit heard them outside and he grinned. He was ready for them. He slipped into his bed and rolled himself round and round in the blankets.

Blam-blam-blam ! Brer Wolf hammered on the door.

" Who's there ? " called Brer Rabbit in a weak voice.

" Friend of yours," said Brer Fox, trying his hardest to speak like Brer Terrapin. " Let me in. "

" Who's this friend of mine ? " called Brer Rabbit.

" Brer Terrapin," said Brer Fox

" Oh, Brer Terrapin, dear Brer Terrapin, I'm in bed, and I'm not feeling too good," said Brer Rabbit. " I want you to fetch the doctor to me, and carry me to hospital to-night. I'm bad, Brer Terrapin. I'm bad."

" You open the door and let me in now, and I'll soon see to you," said Brer Fox, trying to speak like old Brer Terrapin again. Brer Rabbit chuckled to himself. He knew it was Brer Fox all right.

" Oh, Brer Terrapin, dear Brer Terrapin, I can't get up now, I'm not feeling good," he called.

" You come to-night with the doctor, and carry me to hospital. I'll roll myself up well in my blankets so I don't get cold when you carry me. I won't let even my nose peep out. You come to-night Brer Terrapin."

Brer Fox tried the door again. It was certainly bolted as well as locked. He went and peeped in at the window with Brer Wolf. In the bed they saw a big bundle that moved and rolled. Brer Rabbit must be ill to keep in bed like that!

" I'll come to-night with the doctor," said Brer Fox. " You keep in bed, Brer Rabbit. Just you get out and unlock the door before we come to-night."

" Yes, I will," said Brer Rabbit. " I only keep it locked because of those scamps Brer Fox and Brer Wolf, you know. They'd be in here robbing me if they knew I was ill in bed. Ah, they're rogues, the two of them."

Brer Wolf growled, but Brer Fox stopped him. He pulled him away down the garden path.

" Don't growl like that and warn Brer Rabbit just as we've got a good chance of getting him," he said. " We'll come back to-night, and Brer Rabbit will think I'm Brer Terrapin and you're the doctor. He won't be able to see who we really are in the dark. We'll drag him out of bed and carry him to your house. You be sure to have your pot a-boiling, Brer Wolf."

" It'll be a-boiling and a-bubbling!" said Brer Wolf, in his growling voice.

Now, as soon as the two had gone, Brer Rabbit hopped out of bed. He looked out of the window. Yes, there were Brer

Fox and Brer Wolf away in the distance. He unlocked his door and ran out. He went cautiously to Brer Bear's house. There was nobody there.

Brer Rabbit took a sack from the shed outside Brer Bear's house. He looked at the pots of honey on the shelf there and grinned. Those were what he had come for. He stuffed the sack full of them, and then went off home, panting and puffing with the weight.

He put the sack into his bed, and rolled it up tightly in blankets. He put a hot-water bottle into the blankets, and then covered up the big bundle with the quilt. He sang a little song as he worked:

*“Jiggetty-jiggetty, hey-dum-dee,
No one can get the better of me !
I'm just as clever as clever can be,
Jiggetty-jiggetty, hey-dum-dee !”*

It was a nice little song and Brer Rabbit liked it. He sang it about twenty times, and he made up a little dance to go with it. Brer Terrapin was most surprised at this singing and dancing when he came knocking at the door.

“What's all this, Brer Rabbit?” he asked, craning his neck out of his shell. “Who's that in your bed?”

“That's Mister Pots-and-Pots-of-Honey,” said Brer Rabbit, and went off into squeals of laughter. “You and I are going to hide in that cupboard over there, Brer Terrapin, and watch Brer Fox and Brer Wolf take Mister Pots-and-Pots-of-Honey away to hospital to-night.”

Well, when it was dark, along came Brer Fox and Brer Wolf. They tried the door of Brer Rabbit's house. It was unlocked. Good! They opened the door and went in. The moon was up and moonlight came slanting in at the window. On the bed in the corner Brer Fox and Brer Wolf saw a big bundle. Ah—



there was Brer Rabbit, bundled up ready to be taken to hospital!

But Brer Rabbit was with Brer Terrapin in the cupboard, peeping out through a crack! Brer Fox stepped over to the bed.

"Are you ready to come to hospital, Brer Rabbit?" said Brer Fox. "I've got the doctor here."

There was no answer from the bundle on the bed. Brer Fox put his hand down on it and felt the warmth of the hot water bottle. He thought it was the warmth of Brer Rabbit's body.

"He's asleep," he said to Brer Wolf. "Come on, let's take him now. You take him by the top part, I'll take the bottom part. My, he's wrapped himself up well, hasn't he—there's not so much as the tip of an ear showing!"

The two of them dragged the tightly wrapped bundle out of the bed. They staggered out of the door with it. Gracious

goodness! Who would have thought that Brer Rabbit would be so heavy?

Brer Rabbit poked Brer Terrapin and Brer Terrapin nudged Brer Rabbit. What a joke! When Brer Fox and Brer Wolf had gone, the two of them came out of the cupboard and laughed till they cried.

"Now, come on—we haven't a moment to lose," said Brer Rabbit, wiping the tears from his eyes with his paw. "We must go to Brer Bear's. You'll soon see why."

Off they went to Brer Bear's. Brer Rabbit got there first and knocked at the door. Blim-blam! Brer Bear opened it.

"Oh, it's you, Brer Rabbit," he said. "Now, what I want to know is—have you got my pots of honey? Somebody came in when I was out to-day and took the lot. Have you got my pots?"

"Your pots of honey, Brer Bear!" said Brer Rabbit, in a horrified voice. "Of course not. But I know who has. Aha, yes, I can show you who has them—and he's got them now, the rascal, and he's taking them home with a friend of his."

Brer Bear went purple in the face. "You show me this scamp, this rogue, this robber!" he cried. "Take me to him. Just take me!"

"Well, come with me, then," said Brer Rabbit. "Here's Brer Terrapin panting along. He'll come with us. I'll soon find you your pots of honey."

He took Brer Bear to the woods. He knew Brer Fox and Brer Wolf would have to go that way to get to Brer Wolf's house.

"Now, can you hear someone coming along?" said Brer Rabbit. "Well, that'll be Brer Fox, with Brer Wolf. And they'll have a big bundle between them, Brer Bear. YOU JUST ASK THEM WHAT'S IN THAT BUNDLE!"

"I will," said Brer Bear, grimly, and he stepped out into the moonlight just as Brer Fox and Brer Wolf came panting



along. Brer Rabbit and Brer Terrapin stayed behind a tree, watching.

Brer Fox and Brer Wolf were surprised to see Brer Bear so suddenly. They were even more surprised when he spoke sharply to them.

"What's in that bundle?"

"Aha! wouldn't you like to know?" said Brer Fox.

"Yes, I would like to know," said Brer Bear, in such a grim voice that Brer Fox was startled.

"Well—we've got old Brer Rabbit here," said Brer Fox.

"We're taking him to Brer Wolf's to cook in his pot. It's a-boiling ready for us."

"A-boiling and a-bubbling," said Brer Wolf.

Brer Bear gave a snort. "Brer Rabbit's not in that bundle, and you know he isn't!" he said. "You show me what you've got there."

Brer Fox and Brer Wolf stared at him in astonishment. "Now don't be silly, Brer Bear," said Brer Wolf. "We wouldn't tell you a story. We've got Brer Rabbit here. And you can come and have dinner with us if you like and feast on boiled rabbit!"

"You open that bundle," said Brer Bear. "Go on. And if you've got Brer Rabbit there I'll give you a chicken for your dinner every Sunday for a year."

Brer Fox thought Brer Bear must be mad. "All right," he said. "I'll open the bundle—and you'll see Brer Rabbit.

And we'll have him for supper—and we'll have chicken for dinner every Sunday. Ho, ho! We're in luck, Brer Wolf."

They tore open the blankets. They came to a sack. How peculiar! Had Brer Rabbit put himself into a sack? They opened the sack, and the moonlight glinted on pots and pots of honey!

Brer Fox and Brer Wolf were too surprised to say a word. They stood and stared. But Brer Bear didn't stand still and stare. No, he let out a roar that frightened every bird sleeping in the wood, and he ran at Brer Fox and Brer Wolf, waving his great fists about. He hit Brer Fox on the nose—biff! He caught Brer Wolf on the ear—whop!

And then they both turned and ran for their lives. Brer Bear plunged after them. Brer Rabbit leaned against Brer Terrapin, and they both laughed till Brer Terrapin almost cracked his shell.

Pretty soon Brer Bear came back, very pleased with himself. "I've walloped them both," he said.

"And now you and Brer Terrapin come back home with me, Brer Rabbit, and we'll have a good supper. And you shall take three pots of honey home with you as a return for finding them all for me. Those two rogues! Fancy telling me they'd got you inside that bundle—and there you were behind that tree! The story-tellers, the rogues, the bad lots!"

Brer Rabbit went home with Brer Bear, and he and Brer Terrapin had a good supper and a very pleasant time. Then, with three pots of honey as a present the two set off back to the wood, where the bundle of blankets and hot-water bottle had been left. Brer Rabbit collected them, said good night to Brer Terrapin and went home.

He cuddled up in his blankets, and slept peacefully all night long—with his door fast locked. In the morning he got up and set out his breakfast—bread and butter and a carrot—and new honey from one of Brer Bear's pots.

Someone looked in at the window. It was Brer Fox, who still couldn't understand how Brer Rabbit had changed so mysteriously into pots of honey the night before.

Brer Rabbit saw him. "Come along in and have some of Brer Bear's new honey!" he called. "And I'll sing you a new song of mine."

But Brer Fox fled. He didn't want to see a pot of honey again all his life long. The last he heard was Brer Rabbit singing :

"*I'm just as clever as clever can be,
Jiggetty, jiggetty, hey-dum-dee !*"

You're a rascal, Brer Rabbit, you really are!

Just Listen to Old Brer Rabbit !

ONCE IT happened that Brer Rabbit ran lippitty-clippitty round a big tree, and bowled right into old Brer Bear. He knocked all the breath out of him, and Brer Bear sat down with a bump.

But he swept out his hairy arms and caught Brer Rabbit just the same, and Brer Rabbit didn't like that at all.

" You let me go, Brer Bear," he panted. " I didn't see you coming, you know I didn't ! "

But Brer Bear held on tight, and he hugged Brer Rabbit as if he were a long-lost brother. Brer Rabbit could hardly get his breath to speak.

" Let go, Brer Bear, let go ! If you squeeze all my breath out of me I won't be able to tell you where the honey-tree is ! "

When Brer Bear heard this he didn't hug Brer Rabbit quite so hard. A honey-tree! Ah, he would like to hear about that. Brer Bear liked honey better than anything.

Brer Rabbit wriggled a little, but he couldn't get free. " I'm fainting ! " he cried. " I'll be dead in a minute. Let me tell you where the honey-tree is before I go ! "

Brer Bear grunted. He loosened his big arms a little more, but Brer Rabbit pretended to faint, and flopped down in them, all limp. Brer Bear shook him a little.

" Where's that honey-tree ? You tell me, Brer Rabbit."

Brer Rabbit opened his eyes and sighed. He wriggled right out of Brer Bear's arms, sat down, and held his head in his hands.

" Now, let me think. Where did I see that honey-tree? There was a hole half-way up the trunk—yes, and bees working



in and out—must be pounds and pounds of honey there, Brer Bear."

"Well, you tell me where it is or I'll hug you again," said Brer Bear.

"I disremember exactly where I saw it," said Brer Rabbit, frowning. "But maybe I could take you there. Follow me, Brer Bear."

He set off slowly, as if he were tired out with Brer Bear's hugging and clutching. Brer Bear followed, grunting, keeping his sharp little eyes on Brer Rabbit. Brer Rabbit stopped after a time and looked up at the trees. He pointed to them with a trembling paw.

"Brer Bear—look there. Do you see a tree with a hole in?"

Brer Bear looked. He looked at this tree and he looked at that. But he couldn't see one with a hole in.

"I can't see it," he said at last. "Point your paw again, Brer Rabbit."

But there was no answer. Brer Rabbit didn't point his paw because it wasn't there to point. Nor was Brer Rabbit! He had scuttled quietly down a nearby rabbit-hole and he was far, far away, scampering back to his own house, laughing fit to kill himself.

Brer Bear was very angry indeed. He looked all round for Brer Rabbit, and when he saw the rabbit-hole he guessed how easily he had been tricked. He set off for Brer Rabbit's house at once. He squeezed through the hedge at the back and he went to the open window. Maybe he would hear Brer Rabbit telling his old woman where that honey-tree was!

Brer Rabbit saw Brer Bear's little ear just sticking above the window-sill and grinned. He was sitting rocking himself in his rocking-chair, and he sang as he rocked:

*Oh, Old Brer Fox and Old Brer Bear,
They haven't the brains of a flea,
They're easy to trick,
'Cos they're not very quick,
And they can't get the better of ME!"*

Brer Rabbit sang this three times without stopping, each time more loudly than before. It made Brer Bear very angry. He lumbered back through the hedge to find Brer Fox and tell him the song. Brer Fox had brains. Brer Fox would tell him what to do!

He found Brer Fox and told him how he had caught Brer Rabbit, and Brer Rabbit had told him about the honey-tree, and then tricked him. Then he told him the song that Brer Rabbit sang, and Brer Fox was very angry.

"He'll go round singing that song, and everyone will listen and laugh," said Brer Fox. "He's got too big for his boots

again, Brer Rabbit has. I'll go back to his house with you, Brer Bear, and we'll sit outside his window and wait for him to come out of his door. Then we'll pounce."

"Yes," said Brer Bear, pleased. "And first we'll make him tell us where that honey-tree is, and I'll go and get the honey—and you can cook Brer Rabbit and have him for your dinner."

So off they went. It was getting dark now and they couldn't be seen as they settled outside by the window. They sat there as still as mice.

Brer Rabbit would never have known they were there if it hadn't been that old Brer Terrapin came along to call on him that evening. He crawled up Brer Rabbit's garden path, and he fell over something.

It was Brer Fox's tail. It was sticking out on the path, and Brer Terrapin hadn't seen it in the dark. But he knew what it was all right, though he didn't say a word!

He crawled over the tail and went on to the house. He knocked on the bottom of the door, blim-blam, blim-blam.

Brer Rabbit always knew Brer Terrapin's knock because it was so low down on the door. He opened it and welcomed in his friend.

Brer Terrapin spoke to him in a low voice when he had shut the door. "Brer Rabbit, there's Brer Fox's tail lying out there on your path, and where his tail is Brer Fox is, too. He's outside your window, and he's up to no good. And what's more there's someone else, too; I heard his breathing."

"That will be Brer Bear," said Brer Rabbit, and he grinned. "Now, you sit down by the window with me, Brer Terrapin, and we'll talk, nice and loudly, see? And you'll agree with everything I say—and if we don't send those two away before we've finished—and get them into trouble too—I'm not as clever as I think I am. Come along."

Brer Rabbit sat down by the window, and Brer Terrapin pulled himself up into a nearby chair, grinning to himself.

" Well, it's right-down nice of you to call on me like this," said Brer Rabbit, chattily. " I had a shock to-day and I'm not feeling too good. That stupid fellow Brer Bear got his hairy arms round me and almost choked the breath out of me."

" Is that so ? " said Brer Terrapin, sounding horrified. " And how did you get away ? "

" Well, I said I'd show him that honey-tree, Brer Terrapin," said Brer Rabbit. " You know, the one that's got a hole half-way up—a big hole—that's crammed with finest, sweetest honey."

" Ah, yes—very fine honey indeed," agreed Brer Terrapin, although this was the first he had heard of the tree. Brer Bear, outside the window, felt his mouth watering at all this talk of fine honey.

" Well, I was on the way to show it to him," went on Brer Rabbit, " when I suddenly remembered what you'd told me about that tree, Brer Terrapin."

" You did, did you ? " said Brer Terrapin, enjoying himself. " Well, that's a good thing, then."

" Yes. I said to myself, ' Brer Rabbit,' I said, ' here are you taking Brer Bear to that tree to get the honey—and underneath the honey is a whole lot of treasure belonging to Brer Terrapin's Uncle, old Mud Turtle ! ' "

" Ah," said Brer Terrapin, grinning in the dark. " It's a good thing you remembered that, Brer Rabbit, so it is—my Uncle Mud Turtle would be wild with you if you sent Brer Bear to get the honey and he found the treasure hidden there. Why, it's worth a lot of money, that is ! "

" So I slipped down a nearby rabbit-hole, and came right home," said Brer Rabbit. " To think I nearly gave away your secret, Brer Terrapin! I remembered exactly which tree it was too, though you'd told me months ago."

" You did, did you ? " said Brer Terrapin. " You're mighty clever, Brer Rabbit, so you are."



"Yes. I could tell you just what you told me," said Brer Rabbit, and outside the window Brer Fox and Brer Bear held their breath and pricked up their ears as far as they would go. "You said to me: 'Brer Rabbit, seeing you're my friend, I'll tell you a secret. In the sixth tree past the old stump in the middle of the wood, there's a big hole half-way up. There's honey there, Brer Rabbit,' you said, 'and under the honey there's my Uncle Mud Turtle's hidden treasure.'"

"Well, well, now fancy you remembering all that," said Brer Terrapin, trying not to laugh at this tall story.

"Yes. And it's a mighty fine thing that Brer Bear doesn't know anything about it," said Brer Rabbit, "or he'd be off like a streak of lightning to get the honey and the treasure too!"

Well, Brer Bear was doing just what Brer Rabbit said—he was off like a streak of lightning to the wood—and by his side was another streak of lightning—Brer Fox! Brer Fox wasn't going to let Brer Bear get both honey and treasure! No, he was going to have his share all right.

They panted through the trees together. "Well, we certainly heard something to-night all right," said Brer Bear, puffing.

"We certainly did," panted Brer Fox. "Aha—a good thing Brer Rabbit didn't know we were out there listening. He wouldn't have said all that if he had guessed!"

"Here's the old stump in the middle of the wood," said Brer Bear, stopping. "Now we'll count the trees."

They counted them. "One—two—three—four—five—six—and there's a hole halfway up! That's the one!"

Up they went. It was a very big hole. Brer Bear pushed his head into and sniffed. To his surprise he could smell no honey. "I can't sm . . ." he began, but Brer Fox pushed him aside. He wasn't interested in the honey. He wanted the treasure.

They fell down the hole together—and then something happened. It seemed as if an earthquake lived down the hole, an earthquake with hundreds of claws and teeth, that snarled and spat and squalled with a dozen different voices! It was Cousin Wild Cat's home. He lived down in that hole with his wife and seven growing children. They had all been asleep when Brer Bear and Brer Fox had fallen down on them, headlong—but they soon woke up! Then what a to-do there was! Brer Bear and Brer Fox got out of that tree as fast as ever they could and tore home as if a hundred dogs and two hundred wild cats were after them! They were covered with scratches from head to foot, and felt very sorry for themselves indeed.

On the way home they passed Brer Rabbit's house, and they heard his voice.

*"Oh, Old Brer Fox and Old Brer Bear,
They haven't the brains of a flea,
They're easy to trick,
'Cos they're not quick,
And they can't get the better of ME!"*

And then Brer Rabbit and Brer Terrapin held on to each other and laughed till the tears ran down their noses and splashed on to the floor.

As for poor Brer Bear and poor Brer Fox they crept home in silence. They simply couldn't help feeling that that cheeky song was right!

You're Too Clever, Brer Rabbit !

ONCE Brer Rabbit went to market to buy himself a brand new tie. When he got there he found just the tie he wanted—a green one with a pattern of red carrots all over it.

"Ha—just what I like!" said Brer Rabbit, and he put it on. He looked very smart in it, indeed. Seeing the carrots on it made him feel hungry, and he went along to the vegetable stalls to see if there were any good ones there.

"Fine carrots! Good carrots! Cheap, cheap, cheap!" sang out Brer Possum, when he saw Brer Rabbit.

Brer Rabbit stopped to look. They certainly did look wonderful carrots. They made his mouth water, and he thought of carrot soup, and carrot sandwiches and carrot pie.

"What! Do you call those fine carrots!" said Brer Rabbit to Brer Possum. "I've seen better ones in my dustbin!"

"I tell you these are the best in the market," said Brer Possum, angrily. "And the cheapest, too."

"I wouldn't mind buying them if they were cheaper still," said Brer Rabbit. "But I'm not paying a high price for carrots as poor as yours."

Brer Possum threw one at him. Brer Rabbit picked it up and nibbled it. "Pooh!" he said, and threw it down. "Call that a carrot?"

Brer Possum began to feel worried about his carrots. "Listen!" he yelled to Brer Rabbit, who was now walking off. "I'll sell you a sack of these carrots at half-price, just to show you they're good—and you'll be coming back for more next week!"

"Well, I don't mind," said Brer Rabbit, and he went back pretty quickly and paid over the money. Brer Possum pushed a sack towards him, and Brer Rabbit put it on his shoulder.

He went off, almost bent double under the sack—and before he had gone very far he heard a little noise behind him. Thud ! Thud ! Thud ! Thud !

He turned and looked round. A line of carrots ran behind him down the road ! He looked at the sack, and saw an enormous hole in it.

"Here's a fine thing !" said Brer Rabbit. "I've got to go all the way back and pick up those carrots ! Well, I'll just put the sack down and pick them all up."

So off he went, stuffing the fallen carrots into his pocket. And will you believe it, when he came back to his sack, it was gone !

"Ha !" said Brer Rabbit, looking all round. "Carrots don't vanish into thin air. Who's taken them ?"

Well, whoever had taken them hadn't noticed the hole in the sack, and Brer Rabbit soon saw a trail of carrots going through a gap in the hedge and across a field. So off he went, picking them up, and wondering who was carrying his goods.

He came to Brer Fox's house, and the trail of carrots led into the garden. In went Brer Rabbit, lippity, clippity, and knocked on the door.

Blim blam !

Nobody came. Brer Rabbit peeped in at the window. The house was empty. Brer Fox must have dumped the carrots and gone out again.

"That's all right, then," said Brer Rabbit. "I'll just remove them ! I wish I had a barrow, though, to put them in—they'll fall out of the hole all the time."

Then he spied a fine new barrow belonging to Brer Fox. Ah—that would do wonderfully well. He would borrow that for his carrots !

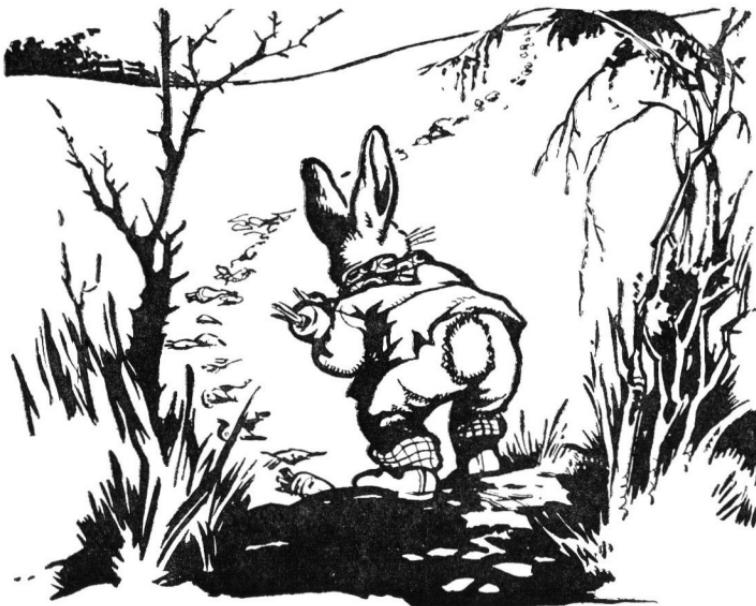
He emptied them into the big barrow, threw the sack into a corner, and went off down the road, wheeling the barrow and humming a little song.

“ *Hi-tiddley-hi-ti !
Carrot soup and carrot pie,
Hi-tiddley-hi-ti !* ”

He got home safely, and tipped the carrots out into his kitchen. Then he looked at the barrow. Should he take it back to old Brer Fox, or not ? Brer Fox hadn't been friendly to him lately. He might pounce on him round a corner.

Just then Brer Bear came by, puffing and panting, with a big sack on his back.

“ Heyo, Brer Rabbit,” he said. “ I've just been to market and got some fine turnips. But, my, they're heavy on my back ! ”



"Borrow this barrow, then," said Brer Rabbit, generously. "It belongs to Brer Fox, and you can leave it with him tomorrow. You're not going his way now."

"Well, thanks, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Bear, and he laid his heavy sack of turnips into the barrow. He picked up the handles and off he went, trundling the big new barrow down the road.

And who should meet him round the corner but old Brer Fox! He was on his way home again, chuckling to think of the big sack of carrots he had found not far from his house.

"Heyo, Brer Fox," began Brer Bear, amiably. "I've got . . ."

Brer Fox suddenly caught sight of the barrow that Brer Bear was wheeling. He let out a yell.

"What are you doing with my barrow! How dare you go to my place and take it? I'll . . ."

"Now, now, you listen to me," said Brer Bear. "I got it from Brer Rabbit. He . . ."

"You didn't! That barrow was in my garden this very morning. I put it there myself," shouted Brer Fox. "And you took my sack, didn't you, and put it into my barrow to carry—my sack of carrots!"

"They're not carrots, they're turnips," said Brer Bear. "And don't you talk to me like that, Brer Fox, or I'll lam you—like this!"

And Brer Bear shot out a heavy paw and caught Brer Fox at the side of the head. Blam!

Brer Fox rolled over on the ground, but he was up again in a trice. He snatched at his barrow.

"You give me my barrow!" he shouted. "And my carrots!"

"I tell you they're turnips," said Brer Bear, annoyed. "Now keep away from me, Brer Fox, or I'll lam you again."

But Brer Fox danced round him trying to snatch his barrow, and calling out rude names. Brer Bear was shocked.

" You're a thief and a robber, you are ! " cried Brer Fox. " Stealing my barrow and stealing my carrots ! "

" They're not your carrots, they're my turnips ! " shouted Brer Bear, losing his temper quite suddenly. " I'll show you what they are all right ! "

And with that Brer Bear put his hand into his sack and took out turnips as fast as ever he could. He hurled them at Brer Fox, with all his strength ! Blam, blam, blam ! The turnips hit Brer Fox with a crash, and he spun round and fell on the ground again.

Brer Bear picked out some more turnips, and Brer Fox got up in a hurry. He tore off down the road at top speed, full of astonishment. Turnips after all ! Well, then, where was that sack of carrots ?

He passed Brer Rabbit's house. There was a wonderful smell of carrot pie coming out on the air. Brer Fox stopped. He peeped in at the window. On the table were piles of fine carrots, wonderful carrots, just like the ones that had been in the sack.

" *Hi-tiddley-hi*," sang Brer Rabbit, pretending not to see Brer Fox.

" *Hi-tiddley-hi*,
Carrot soup and carrot pie,
Hi-tiddley-HI ! "

And then he sat down and laughed till his ears shook. Oh, yes, he's a rascal is old Brer Rabbit !

Brer Rabbit has a Good Friend

IT WAS winter-time. Brer Rabbit was hungry and all his family were hungry too.

“No carrots for sale in the market. No turnips, and no greens,” said Brer Rabbit with a groan, jingling his money in his pocket.

“Brer Fox has plenty,” said Brer Terrapin, who had ambled up for a chat. “He bought hundreds three weeks ago, and he’s stored them up in his shed. Why don’t you buy some from him, Brer Rabbit ?”

“Because he won’t sell any to me,” said Brer Rabbit. “He’s no friend of mine, Brer Terrapin. He says I’ve played so many tricks on him that he wouldn’t give me even the skin off a potato !”

Brer Terrapin put his head under his shell and thought hard. Brer Rabbit scratched on Brer Terrapin’s shell. “Have you gone to sleep ?” he said. “Put your head out, Brer Terrapin !”

Brer Terrapin put his head out again. “I was thinking,” he said. “What about me and you going along to Brer Fox and getting a few carrots out of him ?”

“Can’t be done,” said Brer Rabbit. “I’ve tried it.”

“You haven’t tried it my way,” said Brer Terrapin. “You listen to me. I’ve got a plan, Brer Rabbit.”

“Ah, I thought something was cooking under that big shell of yours !” said Brer Rabbit. “What is it ?”

“Have you ever heard of the Four-Horned Wobble-About ?” asked Brer Terrapin, solemnly.

Brer Rabbit hadn’t. He was surprised. “What’s that ?” he asked.

"Well, listen," said Brer Terrapin, and he began to laugh. "Oh, my, this is going to be a joke! Listen, Brer Rabbit—you're to go along to Brer Fox's one morning when he's in his shed getting carrots, and ask him to sell you some. He'll say no, of course."

"He'll certainly say no," agreed Brer Rabbit. "What next?"

"Then you're to warn him against the Four-Horned Wobble-About," said Brer Terrapin, beginning to laugh again. "Say he's on the look-out for carrots and turnips, and maybe he might go along to Brer Fox's house. And then, my word, you'll see the Four-Horned Wobble-About suddenly appear!"

"How do you know he will?" asked Brer Rabbit. "And what do we do when it comes? I shan't like it."

"You'll point it out to Brer Fox, and you'll tell him that the Four-Horned Wobble-About must be kept off because of the damage it does," said Brer Terrapin. "And you and he must throw carrots and turnips at the Wobble-About as fast as you can. That's all."

"Seems a funny business to me," said Brer Rabbit. "But you're a friend of mine, Brer Terrapin, so I'll do what you say!"

The next morning Brer Rabbit set off to Brer Fox's. Brer Fox was in his shed, sorting out the bad carrots from the good. Brer Rabbit peeped round the door.

"Heyo, Brer Fox!" he said. "Will you sell me some of your carrots to-day?"

"I said no last week, and I say it this week, and I'll say it next week," said Brer Fox. "I don't care if you're nothing but skin and bones, Brer Rabbit!"

"Listen, Brer Fox," said Brer Rabbit, suddenly lowering his voice. "Have you seen that Four-Horned Wobble-About yet? He's always after carrots and turnips, so I've heard. Has he been along to you yet?"

Brer Fox looked up in alarm. "Four-Horned Wobble-About? What's that? I've never heard of it in my life. What's it like?"

"Well," began Brer Rabbit, wondering what it was like, "it's got four horns, and . . . OOOOOOOOOOh!"

"Whatever's the matter!" cried Brer Fox, alarmed at Brer Rabbit's sudden yell.

"Look—look! That must be the Four-Horned Wobble-About!" cried Brer Rabbit, pointing. He darted into the shed beside Brer Fox. "Keep him out, Brer Fox, keep him out!"

Brer Fox looked out of the shed-door and gaped in horror. A most curious creature was at the gate. It was round, bright blue, with red legs, and had four curious horns with branching antlers at the tips, sticking up from its rounded, curved blue back. It hissed loudly.

"I don't like it," wailed Brer Fox. "What shall we do, Brer Rabbit?"

"Keep him off!" yelled Brer Rabbit, and picked up a turnip. "Throw something at him. Hit him!"

And soon the two of them were hurling carrots and turnips at the Four-Horned Wobble-About that stood hissing at the front gate. Bang! Thud! Biff! Some of them hit him hard but he didn't seem to mind! He took one step forward on his red legs and that made Brer Fox send a truly enormous shower of carrots at him.

The Wobble-About gave an extra big hiss and backed out of the gate. It disappeared. Brer Fox threw his arms round Brer Rabbit's neck. "It's gone," he said. "Oh, what a dreadful creature! Come and help me to pick up my carrots and turnips, Brer Rabbit."

So, keeping a good look-out for the Four-Horned Wobble-About, Brer Fox and Brer Rabbit went cautiously up the path and picked up a few carrots and turnips. But beyond the

gate there was none to be seen. What had happened to all those that had rolled out of the gate into the road beyond?

"Queer," said Brer Fox, staring up and down. "Not a carrot or turnip to be seen out here. I suppose the Wobble-About must have taken them."

The two of them picked up what were left and Brer Fox put them in his shed and locked the door. He didn't give a single one to Brer Rabbit!

"Well, thanks for all the carrots and turnips you didn't give me," said Brer Rabbit, and hurried out of the gate. He was beginning to guess what had happened!

He raced home—and there he found the Four-Horned Wobble-About waiting for him—surrounded by Brer Rabbit's children, who each carried a small sack of carrots and turnips!

"Brer Terrapin! So you were the Wobble-About!" cried Brer Rabbit. "What a sight you look!"



"We painted his shell blue! We painted his legs red! We stuck four big candles on his shell and tied little twigs to them for antlers!" squealed the baby rabbits, capering round. "And we followed him to Brer Fox's with our little sacks and picked up all the carrots and turnips that rolled through the gate! We did, we did!"

"You old scoundrel!" said Brer Rabbit to Brer Terrapin. "You gave me a real fright when you crawled in at the gate. Did I hurt you when I hit you?"

"Not a bit. The turnips just bounced off my shell!" chuckled Brer Terrapin. "Take these candles off me, Brer Rabbit. I don't like the smell of tallow. And put some of those carrots and turnips in a saucepan for soup. I'm hungry."

Well, they all had a fine feast of soup, and old Brer Terrapin sat up at the table, too, still looking very gay in blue and red, enjoying the soup.

And the next day Brer Fox got a surprise. An envelope was pushed through his door with some money in it, and a note.

"Payment for carrots and turnips. Thanks very much. From Brer Rabbit."

"Funny!" said Brer Fox, puzzled. "I never sold him any. Not one. He's mad!"

But he wasn't. He was just being honest—and bless us all, what a fuss old Brer Rabbit made of Brer Terrapin after that!

"It's a wonderful thing to have a friend like you!" he kept telling Brer Terrapin. "You rogue and scamp of a Four-Horned Wobble-About!"

Brer Rabbit Goes Skating !

ONE winter's night Brer Rabbit thought he would go fishing. He went and called on Brer Terrapin to ask him if he would go, too.

"I'm taking my boat," said Brer Rabbit. "I'm going to row right across the river to the other side, to a place where there's plenty of fish. You come too, Brer Terrapin. We'll catch some good fish for breakfast this hungry weather."

"Do you mind if my old uncle comes, too?" said Brer Terrapin. "Stick your head out, Uncle, and say 'Howdy' to Brer Rabbit."

"Howdy-do!" said Brer Terrapin's old uncle, shooting his neck out suddenly from under his big shell.

"Howdy!" said Brer Rabbit. "Yes, bring your uncle, too, Brer Terrapin. Plenty of room in my boat!"

"Brrrrr!" said Brer Terrapin as they all three went to find Brer Rabbit's boat tied up by the river. "It's freezing cold, Brer Rabbit. Good thing I've got no whiskers, or they'd freeze up like icicles! You be careful of yours!"

They all got into the boat and Brer Rabbit rowed right across to the other side of the river. "You be careful, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Terrapin, peering over the edge of the boat. "Brer Wolf lives near here, and he likes to fish about here too. You be careful he doesn't catch you!"

Just as he spoke there came a bellow from the bank. It was old Brer Wolf!

"Hey, Brer Rabbit! What are you doing in my bit of fishing-water? You get out!"

Brer Rabbit drew in his oars and threw out a small anchor.

"We'll anchor here," he said to the terrapins, not taking a bit of notice of Brer Wolf's yells. "Don't you worry about all that shouting. It's just noise and nothing else. Brer Wolf's boat has got a hole in it so he can't come after us. We'll fish here and see what we get."

Well, they caught a whole lot of fish, and Brer Wolf got quite hoarse with shouting at them and telling them to get out of his bit of fishing-water. But pretty soon he got tired of that, and went back to his home nearby.

And then Brer Rabbit suddenly noticed that he couldn't jerk his line out of the water. What was happening? He peered over the edge of the boat in the moonlight—and what a shock he got! The river was freezing fast!

"My, my!" said Brer Rabbit, startled. "We'd better get back before the river's quite frozen. It must be a bitter cold night to-night!"

But the boat wouldn't move! It was stuck fast in the ice. The oars broke through the ice, but Brer Rabbit couldn't use them. He looked at the terrapins in fright.

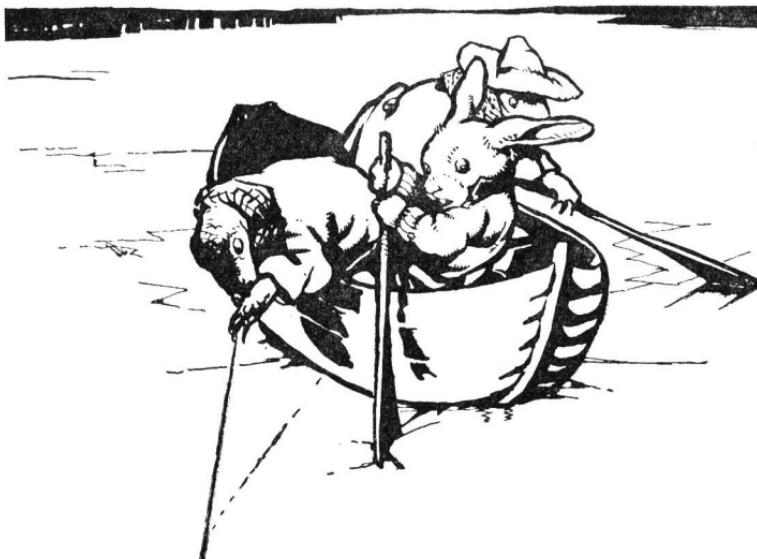
"What'll we do? The water's frozen. We're stuck!"

"That's bad," said Brer Terrapin. "See if the ice will hold you, Brer Rabbit. Then maybe we can slide back."

Very soon the ice was hard enough to hold them. But poor Brer Rabbit couldn't go a step without falling down—and as for the terrapins, their legs just slid helplessly on the ice, and they didn't get anywhere at all!

"Brer Wolf will see what's happened when daylight's come!" said Brer Rabbit, with a groan. "He'll put on his skates and skate over the ice to the boat—and maybe he'll have rabbit-and-terrapin pie for his dinner!"

The river was frozen even harder by the morning. Brer Wolf was surprised to see it covered with ice when he peeped out of his window next morning. Ahal! There was Brer Rabbit's boat fast stuck in the frozen river.



"Just wait till I get my skates on, and I'll catch you all right, Brer Rabbit!" yelled Brer Wolf.

Brer Rabbit watched Brer Wolf come down to the bank of the frozen river. He watched him put on his skates.

"If only I had some skates!" he groaned. "I'd skate out of sight in two shakes of a duck's tail! But none of us can escape because we can't even stand on this slippery ice!"

Then Brer Terrapin's old uncle spoke up. "Maybe I know a way to get us all free," he said. "Now see, Brer Rabbit. Put me out of the boat on to my back—and Brer Terrapin, too."

"What's the use of that?" said Brer Rabbit.

"Then after that you get out, too," said Brer Terrapin's uncle. "And you put one foot on my underside, and the other on Brer Terrapin's—and we'll catch hold of your toes hard. And you can skate away on us, right to the other side of the river. We'll be your skates, Brer Rabbit; our shells will slide as fast as anything!"

What an idea ! Brer Rabbit dropped them on to the ice, upside down, side by side. He hopped overboard himself and put a hind foot on each. The terrapins held his feet firmly in their clawed feet.

And then, just as Brer Wolf came skating over the ice, Brer Rabbit skated off, too, with the two upside-down terrapins for his skates ! He went like the wind—and Brer Wolf was so astonished that his feet caught in one another and over he went, higgledy-piggledy, on the ice.

“ Take a few lessons, Brer Wolf, take a few lessons ! ” yelled out Brer Rabbit, and came to a stop at the opposite bank. The terrapins let go his feet and he leapt off. He put them the right way up, and they scrambled down the nearest hole.

“ Like one of my fish, Brer Wolf ? ” shouted Brer Rabbit, and threw one at Brer Wolf. It hit him smack on the nose—and off went wicked Brer Rabbit with his string of fish, laughing fit to kill himself. And I guess that he and the two terrapins feasted on a fine fish-pie that night !

Brer Rabbit and Mr. Long-Legs

NOW ONCE when Brer Rabbit was out shopping at the market old Brer Fox went snooping round and found where Brer Rabbit had hidden his store of carrots.

It didn't take Brer Fox long to shovel them into a sack and go off with them. "And I'm mighty glad to play a trick on that tiresome rabbit at last!" said Brer Fox, as he staggered through the woods to his house. "He'll have to look a long time before he finds these carrots!"

Brer Fox took them into his house for safety, and then up to his bedroom. He put the sack under the bed. "Now, if Brer Rabbit can get those carrots back before they're all eaten, he's cleverer than I think he is!" said old Brer Fox.

Well, Brer Rabbit soon found out that his carrots had gone—and he knew who had taken them, too! "Brer Fox has left his paw-marks around all right!" said Brer Rabbit, looking at the ground. "And there's the mark where he rested his tail, too."

There wasn't a single carrot left. Brer Rabbit was very angry indeed. It was too late to go and snoop round Brer Fox's house, but he went along the next day all right.

There was a nice smell of soup hanging round about Brer Fox's house. Brer Fox was sitting smoking at his window. He waved to Brer Rabbit when he saw him. "What's that cooking?" said Brer Rabbit.

"Carrot soup," said Brer Fox. "Come and join me."

"Join the soup you mean. No, thank you," said Brer Rabbit at once. "You've got my carrots, Brer Fox."

" You don't say so ! " said Brer Fox. " However did they get here ? "

" I don't know, but I can guess," said Brer Rabbit. " And I know who's going to get them back for me, too."

" Who ? " said Brer Fox, with a grin.

" A friend of mine," said Brer Rabbit.

" If you mean Brer Terrapin, he's welcome," said Brer Fox. " I'll put him in the soup, too."

" I don't mean Brer Terrapin," said Brer Rabbit. " I mean my old friend, Mr. Long-Legs."

" And who's he when he's at home ? " asked Brer Fox.

" You wait and see," said Brer Rabbit. " He'll be along all right. And let me tell you this, Brer Fox—he'll scare the life out of you if you don't give him what he wants—and that's my carrots ! "

Brer Rabbit stalked off, and Brer Fox sat and grinned to himself. He didn't believe in this Mr. Long-Legs.

Now, the next day Brer Fox had a cold and he stayed in bed. Brer Wolf came to see him. Brer Fox showed him the sack of carrots under his bed, and told Brer Wolf about Mr. Long-Legs, Brer Rabbit's new friend. They both laughed.

" I'll believe in him when I see him," said Brer Wolf.

Now, Brer Rabbit was very busy. He had got a big turnip head and he cut out eyes, made a nose and sliced out a cross-looking mouth. He had stuck on black wool from his rug for hair, and had popped an old hat on top. He put the whole thing on a long pole, and then tied a scarf under the turnip's chin.

" There, dear Mr. Long-Legs," he said. " You can get my carrots for me ! "

He knew Brer Fox was in bed. He set off with the turnip head at the top of his pole, whistling a little tune to himself.

He came to Brer Fox's house and crept through the hedge. He went to the back window of Brer Fox's bedroom. Up

went the pole till Mr. Long-Leg's head was bobbing against the window-pane! Knock, Knock, Knock!

Brer Fox and Brer Wolf looked up. "Ooooh—what's that?" said Brer Wolf, scared. "A face at the window!"

"How did it get there?" said Brer Fox, in alarm. "Is the fellow standing on a ladder?"

"Either that—or he's got very long legs," said Brer Wolf. And when he had said that, the same thought struck them both. Mr. Long-Legs! Could Brer Rabbit have a friend called Long-Legs after all—and had he sent him for the carrots?

"Go and see if he's on a ladder," said Brer Fox.

But Brer Wolf wasn't going to stir from his seat by the bed. He didn't like the look of Mr. Long-Legs' fierce face at all. It made him feel very queer indeed. The head bobbed across the window and seemed as if it were trying to see all over the room.



Then it disappeared. Brer Fox and Brer Wolf gave a sigh of relief. But goodness me, in a minute there came a noise at the other window of the bedroom—and there was Mr. Long-Legs' turnip-face again, looking as fierce as ever.

"He's looking for the carrots," said Brer Wolf, in a panic. "He must know they're under the bed. Will he get into your bedroom, Brer Fox?"

Brer Fox didn't like the idea of that at all. He lay back and shivered and shook. Mr. Long-Legs disappeared again—but soon came back to the first window and made Brer Wolf howl in fright.

Then Mr. Long-Legs disappeared once more. But a deep and hollow voice came up to the window. "Open the window and let me in. Or come down and open the door! I'm Mr. Long-Legs and I want those carrots!"

There came the sound of someone banging hard at the front door. That was Brer Rabbit, of course, having a wonderful time! Brer Fox almost fell out of bed in fright when he heard the noise at the door.

"If you don't let me in, I'll find some way to get those carrots!" shouted the hollow voice through the letter-box.

"Give him the carrots," said Brer Wolf. "I shan't dare to go home if he's wandering about outside on his long legs, waiting for me."

"I'm not giving up those carrots," said Brer Fox. "You spend the night with me here, Brer Wolf, if you're scared to go home."

"You're scared to let me!" said Brer Wolf, crossly. "You give up those carrots, Brer Fox—they're not yours, anyway. You don't want Mr. Long-Legs to go off and get the rest of his family here, do you?"

This was a horrid thought. But still Brer Fox wasn't going to give up those carrots! The two said nothing for a few minutes. Perhaps Mr. Long-Legs had gone? Everything was so quiet.

Brer Rabbit had gone to get a ladder. He was climbing up the roof, holding on to the ladder with one hand and carrying Mr. Long-Legs with the other. And how Brer Rabbit was grinning! He was going to pop Mr. Long-Legs down the chimney, head-first and upside down! What would old Brer Fox say to that?

Brer Fox heard the noise in the chimney first. He sat up, alarmed. Brer Wolf got into the wardrobe, and left the door open just a crack to see through.

And then the upside-down face of Mr. Long-Legs appeared suddenly in the fireplace, looking even more fierce the wrong way up, and a hollow voice came down the chimney with him.

"Where are those carrots?"

Brer Fox covered himself up with the bedclothes, squealing in fright. Brer Wolf tumbled out of the wardrobe, panting as if he had been running a race.

He ran to the bed and dragged out the bag of carrots. "Here they are, here they are!" he shouted. "Don't come into the room, Mr. Long-Legs. I'm scared of you."

Brer Rabbit heard every word up on the roof and he almost fell off with laughing. Then he spoke down the chimney in a very solemn voice, jigging Mr. Long-Legs' turnip-head about in the fireplace as he did so.

"Throw the carrots out of the window and I won't come and get you, Brer Wolf. Throw them out of the window."

Brer Wolf was only too glad to. He opened the window, dragged the sack over to it, and threw it out—plonk! It fell into the garden below. Brer Wolf shut and fastened the window again.

Mr. Long-Legs had taken his head out of the fireplace now, thank goodness. Brer Rabbit was carrying him down the ladder. He had heard the plonk of the sack of carrots on the ground, and he meant to get them before Brer Fox scurried

down after them ! He made Mr. Long-Legs peep in at the bedroom once more, just for luck—then he lowered him again, put the sack of carrots over his shoulder and went off through the front gate with them. And as he went he sang a loud song:

*“ Old Brer Fox, he got in a fix,
And old Brer Rabbit he got up to tricks,
Hey diddle, ho diddle, hi !
Then old Brer Fox, he got in a fright,
But old Brer Rabbit got carrots all right,
Hey diddle, ho diddle, hi ! ”*

Brer Fox and Brer Wolf heard this peculiar song in silence.
“ What does he mean—he got up to tricks ? ” asked Brer Fox, when the song died away. But neither of them knew !

